

## ETHNIC MINORITY-MAJORITY ASYMMETRY AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS ACROSS 11 NATIONS

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### RESUMEN

Analizamos el nivel de xenofobia y la identificación étnica y nacional de mayorías étnicas y minorías con los datos de una encuesta en 11 países. Predijimos que las mayorías tendrían una posición social superior a las minorías y se sentirían más representativas del grupo nacional que las minorías. Por tanto, comparado con las minorías, esperábamos que las mayorías mostrarán (1) niveles superiores de identificación nacional, (2) una relación más positiva entre la identificación étnica y nacional, (3) niveles superiores de xenofobia contra los inmigrantes, y (4) una relación más positiva entre la identificación y xenofobia. Los resultados fueron muy consistentes con estas predicciones. También encontramos que la identificación étnica influye en el impacto de identificación nacional sobre la xenofobia, sólo en el caso de las mayorías. Interpretamos los resultados en términos de las relaciones del subgrupo con las categorías superiores y los recientes modelos de relaciones entre grupos.

### ABSTRACT

Using survey data from 11 countries, we analysed levels of xenophobia and ethnic and national identification of ethnic majorities and minorities who both share national citizenship. We predicted that majorities would enjoy higher social status than minorities and feel more representative of the superordinate national group than minorities. Hence, compared to minorities, majorities were expected to show (1) higher levels of national identification, (2) a more positive relationship between ethnic and national identification, (3) higher levels of xenophobia against immigrants, and (4) a more positive relationship between identification and xenophobia. Results were largely consistent with these predictions. In addition, we also found that only for majorities ethnic identification mediated the impact of national identification on xenophobia. Results are discussed in terms of subgroup relations within superordinate categories and recent models of intergroup relations.

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**Key words:** ethnic and national identification, xenophobia, ethnic majorities and minorities

### Introduction

Empirical evidence demonstrating the importance of subgroup relations within superordinate categories for understanding prejudice towards social groups has accumulated in recent years (Gaertner and Dovidio, 2000; Hornsey and Hogg, 2000; Lipponen, Helkama, and Juslin, 2003; Mummendey and Wenzel, 1999; Wenzel, Mummendey, Weber and Waldzus, 2003). These studies rely on the basic assumption that almost any social group can

be categorised at a more abstract, superordinate level. Sweden, as a national group, can for example be categorised at the superordinate level as an European country. As a European subgroup, Sweden shares group membership with a number of other European countries. Similarly, within countries, different ethno-linguistic subgroups (such as the English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians) can live side by side within a superordinate national category.

Recent research has shown that in most instances subgroups are in a hierarchical relationship such that some subgroups have better access to resources, greater control over institutions, and higher social status within the superordinate group (Brewer, von Hippel, and Goodin, 1999; Devos and Banaji, 2005; Sidanius, Feshbach, Levin, and Pratto, 1997; Sidanius and Petrocik, 2001; Staerklé, Sidanius, Green, and Molina, 2005). This asymmetry is likely to have an impact on the relationship subgroups establish with outgroups. This article analyzes group identification and intergroup relations occurring within superordinate categories composed of different subgroups, and aims to demonstrate that ethnic subgroups within a national category develop attitudes towards their own and other groups as a function of their minority or majority status. In nation-states, the study of the impact of subgroup relations on outgroup attitudes is of particular importance, because attitudes towards immigrants are a major factor in the political battlefield (e.g., Pettigrew and Meertens, 1995). Our first objective is to analyse how identification with ethno-linguistic subgroups and superordinate national groups is moderated by membership in ethnic minority and majority groups, and how these two forms of identification are related to each other across 11 national contexts. Second, we examine how attitudes towards immigrants are shaped by minority or majority group membership. More specifically, we will analyse to what extent identification with the ethnic subgroup and the superordinate national category predicts negative attitudes towards immigrants for both minority and majority groups.

### **Subgroup Asymmetry, Ethnic Identification, and National Identification**

Historical analyses of the nation-building process have shown that nations have developed around ethnic core groups which in most cases represent the national majority group (Horowitz, 2000; Kuzio, 2002; Smith, 1986). In general, majorities have an advantage over minorities because they are likely to be in control of the state, its institutions, and its language. This is true for “old” European nations as well as for colonised countries such as the United States where the White Anglo-Saxon protestant culture

and its values provided the yardstick by which minorities were and still are evaluated by the majority (Biernat, Vescio, Theno, and Crandall, 1996). The assumption that nations are built around core ethnic majority groups implies that the relationship between minorities and majorities tends to be asymmetrical (Sidanius et al., 1997). Hence, majorities are likely to develop a sense of ownership and entitlement to the nation which conditions their attitudes towards other ethnic subgroups and towards immigrants.

Support for subgroup asymmetry comes from research that has examined the effects of status differences between ethnic groups on ingroup attachment and outgroup attitudes. Ethnic minority-majority asymmetry has been evidenced on the basis of two general criteria (Sidanius and Petrocik, 2001; Staerklé, Sidanius, Green, and Molina, 2005): (a) majorities express higher levels of national attachment and loyalty than minorities, and (b) for majorities there is a positive and mutually reinforcing relationship between ethnic subgroup and national superordinate attachment, whereas for minorities this relationship is significantly less positive (see also Brewer, Von Hippel, and Goodin, 1999). In this paper, we include attitudes towards immigrants as a third criterion through which subgroup asymmetry can be evidenced. Asymmetry is present when ethnic majorities express more negative attitudes towards immigrants than minorities (Sidanius and Petrocik, 2001).

### **Subgroup Asymmetry and Xenophobia**

A number of studies have analysed differential patterns of outgroup hostility as a function of minority – majority status of social groups (Leonardelli and Brewer, 2001; Mullen, Brown, and Smith, 1992; Sachdev and Bourhis, 1991). By and large, minority groups have been found to discriminate against outgroups more than majority groups on a number of indicators, especially when the minority-majority status is only defined in numeric terms. But in the context of nation states, ethnic subgroup relations cannot be understood in numeric terms only. This particular intergroup context is defined by the interplay between subgroup and superordinate levels of categorisation, that is, with nested intergroup relations. Therefore, outgroup prejudice cannot be accounted for with a clear-cut ingroup-outgroup categorisation. From the perspective of the subgroup, the superordinate group is partly ingroup, partly outgroup. It is ingroup to the extent that the subgroup is part of a common superordinate group, and it is outgroup to the extent that a more or less large part of the superordinate group is made up of other subgroups. According to Mummendey and Wenzel (1999) subgroups have a tendency to generalise the attributes,

norms and values that define their group to the superordinate category. Thus, important subgroup values and norms, the “subgroup prototype”, overlap to some extent with the prototype of the superordinate group. This prototype then provides the comparison dimensions and becomes the common background against which differences between subgroups are evaluated. When two subgroups are included in a common group, the prototype of the common, superordinate group constitutes the norms by which to judge what is different. Hence, to the extent that subgroups generalise their attributes to the superordinate group, they tend to perceive other subgroups as deviating from the norms of the superordinate category, and this perception of deviation from superordinate group norms may result in negative outgroup attitudes. The “ingroup projection model” is particularly powerful in explaining how identification with a common, superordinate category leads to more negative rather than more positive attitudes towards other subgroups (as predicted for example by the common ingroup identity model, Gaertner and Dovidio, 2000).

Groups with relatively high social power are especially likely to impose their norms on a higher-order category (Lorenzi-Cioldi, 1998): “*High-status groups and majorities might be particularly prone to further increase the value of their attributes, by pronouncing them to be norms of a more inclusive category*” (Mummendey and Wenzel, 1999, p. 166). Thereby, they are likely to be more identified with the superordinate group, that is, the nation in the context of the current study. In ethnic subgroup relations, powerful majority subgroups are particularly likely to lay the normative foundations of discrimination by perceiving themselves as representative of the superordinate category (Wenzel, Mummendey, Weber and Waldzus, 2003). Although we analyse attitudes towards immigrants rather than towards other ethnic subgroups *per se* (which is typically the case in subgroup research), we expect that much the same processes are at work in judgements of both types of outgroups.

The minority-majority asymmetry can also be approached from the angle of the old intergroup problem of the relationship between ingroup favouritism and outgroup discrimination (Brewer, 1999). More specifically, we are concerned with the relationship between group identification and outgroup hostility. Although ingroup favouritism cannot be equated with ingroup identification, group identification is likely to be a precursor to a positive evaluation of the group and thus to ingroup favouritism, for example through the establishment of positive distinctiveness in relation to outgroups (Tajfel, 1981). The idea that attachment to one’s group necessarily entails hostility towards outgroups is widespread, and can be derived from

different theoretical perspectives, including social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981) or functionalist accounts based on realistic conflicts between groups (Sherif, 1966). Yet, there is increasing agreement that there is nothing automatic in the relationship between ingroup identification and outgroup derogation (Brewer, 1999; Duckitt and Mphuthing, 1998), and that the relationship depends, among other factors, on social status, comparison dimensions, and comparative context (e.g., Ros, Huici, and Gómez, 2000). According to Brewer (1999), the relationship between ingroup identification and outgroup hostility is likely to be positive if the ingroup endorses ideas of absolute moral superiority that is incompatible with tolerance for difference. In complex national ingroups, institutions, rules and laws take on a character of moral authority, and since ethnic majorities tend to be in control of national institutions, they are also more likely to endorse claims of moral superiority. The effects of moral superiority may further be exacerbated through deliberate manipulation by group leaders to exploit social differentiation between subgroups in order to secure or maintain political power (Reicher and Hopkins, 2001). Moral superiority also provides the justification for domination of outgroups (Sidanius and Pratto, 1999). These arguments are closely related to the ingroup projection process (Mummendey and Wenzel, 1999) in which powerful ingroups impose their norms upon a superordinate category. Other factors that make a positive relationship between ingroup love and outgroup hostility more likely are conditions of scarcity of resources and perceived realistic threat (Duckitt and Mphuthing, 1998) and fear and distrust of outgroups (Brewer, 2000). Thus, there is much evidence to suggest that the relationship between ingroup identification and outgroup rejection is dependent upon the status of the subgroups.

## **Hypotheses**

We investigate the implications of minority-majority asymmetry across eleven national contexts concerning (a) the relationship between ethnic subgroup and national superordinate levels of identification, and (b) negative intergroup attitudes. Starting from the assumption that ethnic majorities are likely to be in a higher status position than minorities, we expect that they are more likely to feel entitled to the nation and to consider that their group is representative of the superordinate category (Deschamps, 1982). Five predictions are derived from the discussion about minority – majority asymmetry.

First, majorities should identify more strongly with the nation than minorities. In addition, we also explore whether minorities or majorities have higher levels of ethnic subgroup identification.

Second, for majorities one should observe a more positive correlation between ethnic and national attachment than for minorities.

Third, majorities are expected to exhibit more negative judgements against outgroups (i.e., immigrants) than minorities.

Fourth, for majorities we expect a positive relationship between in-group identification (both at the subgroup and the superordinate level) and negative outgroup attitudes, whereas for minorities this relationship should be negative, or at least significantly less positive.

Finally, since immigrants seek to enter and become part of a national group rather than of an ethnic group, we expect national identification to precede ethnic identification as a predictor of xenophobia. In other words, hostile attitudes towards immigrants should be determined first of all by national identification. However, to the extent that majorities cognitively equate the national and their ethnic group, ethnic identification should mediate the impact of national identification on xenophobia for majorities, but not for minorities. This prediction of a moderated mediation should reveal that for majorities, but not for minorities, identification with the superordinate category does not directly predict discrimination, but that it is mediated by subgroup identification.

## **Method**

Data were taken from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) 1995 module on national identity. The ISSP is an ongoing program of cross-national collaboration intended to provide comparative data on a regular basis on important social topics. The 1995 module focused on national identity, and included measures of ethnic group membership and ethnic identification. The survey was conducted in 23 countries, with probability-based nationwide samples (with separate samples for East and West Germany).

### *National Sample Selection*

Only 11 out of the 24 subsamples were used in our analyses. Table 1 summarizes the sample construction. Selection of countries was based on the following criteria: (a) the national sample contained the data necessary to test our predictions (i.e., ethnic group membership and ethnic identification), and/or (b) were ethno-culturally sufficiently heterogeneous to provide statistically meaningful minority sample sizes. As our predictions bear on

the relationship between established, resident, ethno-cultural minorities and majorities, respondents without national citizenship of the country in which they reside as well as those who arrived in the country after the age of 16 were excluded from the analyses. In countries where most minority members are immigrants without national citizenship, or where restrictive citizenship policies make naturalization difficult, this selection eliminated a considerable proportion of minority respondents (e.g., in Germany). In East European countries, excluded respondents were mainly part of ethnic groups not incorporated in the national citizenry (e.g., Croatians in Slovenia).

Mean age differed between the national samples (lowest means in Canada and the Slovak Republic, 41 years; highest mean in Bulgaria, 49 years). Distribution of gender groups also varied between countries (lowest female proportion in West Germany, 46.4%; highest in Latvia, 60.9%). Sex, age and education level (measured in years of education) were controlled for in the analyses.

#### *Ethnic Subgroup Classification*

Asymmetry predictions tested comparisons between ethnic majority and minority subgroups. The item used to classify participants asked either the “country or parts of the world from which respondents’ ancestors came”, or respondents had to pick their group from a list of the major ethnic groups of the country. In some countries, ethnic group membership was included in the demographic participant information. Ethnicity was loosely defined as membership in any ascribed group defined with racial, linguistic, national or religious criteria, whichever was most meaningful to participants (Horowitz, 2000). In most countries, the classification into dominant and subordinate ethnic subgroups was straightforward, since the dominant subgroup shared the same category label as the nation (e.g., Czech and Czech Republic, Russian and Russia). Accordingly, all respondents who indicated another ethnic origin were classified as members of *Subordinate minorities*. Participants who refused to answer the ethnicity question or who indicated *mixed, other* or unspecified origins were left unclassified.

In the Anglo-Saxon countries, majority groups themselves are former immigrant groups. In the U.S. sample, we distinguished European immigrants (*Dominant majority* group) from African, Caribbean, Arab, Asian and Hispanic Americans who were categorized as *Subordinate minorities*. In Canada, European immigrants (mostly but not exclusively from British descent) were classified as the majority group, with the exception of the French Canadians who were assigned the subordinate minority status, to-

gether with a small number of more recent immigrants. In New Zealand, finally, participants with European and North-American origins were classified as *majority*, and Asians and Pacific islanders as *Subordinate minorities*. Table 1 indicates for each country the main ethnic minority groups which make up approximately 90% of the respective minority samples.

**Table 1**  
*Sample Drawn from ISSP 1995, with Main Ethnic Minority Groups*

	Majorities		Minorities		Main ethnic minority groups (accounting for > 90% of sample)	Natives		Total N
	N	%	N	%		N	%	
Bulgaria	921	85.0	162	15.0	Turkish, Roma			1083
Canada	672	55.4	541	44.6	French-speaking Canadians			1213
Czech Republic	852	91.8	76	8.2	Austrian, Slovak, German, Polish			928
West Germany	1069	96.3	41	3.7	Austrian, Greek, other West European			1110
Great Britain	940	96.2	37	3.8	Irish, Indian, Black, other West European			977
Latvia	599	83.0	123	17.0	Russian			722
New Zealand	689	79.0	28	3.2	Chinese, Pacific Islanders	155	17.8 (Maori)	872
Russia	1283	91.9	113	8.1	Tatar, Ukrainian, Jewish, Byelorussian			1396
Slovak Republic	1189	88.4	156	11.6	Hungarian			1345
Slovenia	934	97.7	22	2.3	Hungarian, Croatian, Serbian			956
U.S.	785	81.5	120	12.5	Black, Latino	58	6.0 (Am. Indian)	963
Total	9933	85.9	1419	12.3		213	1.8	11565



In addition, we treated separately native populations in the U.S. and in New Zealand, because they are likely to consider the nation as part of an ancestral homeland. This unique relationship with the nation should be reflected in a stronger sense of entitlement to the nation than is the case for other minority groups.

### *Measures*

Our predictions required measures of ethnic subgroup identification, national superordinate identification and negative intergroup attitudes. Both identification measures refer to the idea that social groups (the ethnic group and the nation) are part of the individual's self-concept (Tajfel, 1981). Subgroup identification was defined with a single measure, *ethnic identification*, assessed with perceived closeness to one's ethnic group. Similarly, *national identification* was measured as perceived "closeness to respondents' country" (1 = *not close at all*, 2 = *not very close*, 3 = *close*, 4 = *very close*). *Xenophobia* was assessed with five items (reverse coded when appropriate) that describe effects of immigrant presence in a country (Immigrants are good for country's economy, ...increase crime rates; ...make country more open to new ideas; ...take away jobs; number of immigrants should be decreased-increased). The scale ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Overall reliability of the xenophobia measure was satisfactory (Cronbach's alpha = .78), with only two national indicators below .70 (.58 in Bulgaria and .64 in Russia).

## **Results**

### *Mean Levels of National and Ethnic Identification*

We first assessed mean differences of national and ethnic identification between majority and minority groups for each national context separately (Table 2). Results reveal that in four out of eleven countries, majorities had higher levels of national identification than did minorities. The largest difference was observed in Canada where the Anglophones were clearly more identified with the nation than the Francophones. In all the remaining cases, the difference was not significant. Thus, the prediction of a higher levels of superordinate identification for majorities is partially confirmed when one looks at the countries separately. The overall effect clearly supports this general conjecture: majorities ( $M = 3.28$ ) tend to have higher levels of national identification than minorities ( $M = 3.00$ ).

**Table 2**  
*Mean Levels of National Identification and Ethnic Identification  
as a Function of National Status*

	National identification					Ethnic identification				
	Majorities	Minorities	Difference	F	$\eta^2$	Majorities	Minorities	Difference	F	$\eta^2$
Canada	3.24	2.70	.54	101.39***	.084	2.48	3.09	-.61	110.48***	.097
Slovak Republic	3.33	2.90	.43	49.05***	.036	3.51	3.55	-.03	<1	.000
West Germany	3.01	2.61	.39	12.04**	.012	3.11	2.75	.36	9.54**	.009
Latvia	3.34	3.17	.17	5.07*	.007	--	--			
Great Britain	2.87	2.69	.18	1.47	.002	--	--			
Bulgaria	3.64	3.56	.08	1.41	.001	3.83	3.87	-.03	<1	.001
Russia	3.21	3.18	.03	<1	.000	2.89	2.54	.35	13.42***	.011
U.S.	3.15	3.13	.02	<1	.000	3.06	3.43	-.37	16.94***	.020
Czech Republic	3.40	3.38	.02	<1	.000	3.59	2.66	.94	120.56***	.129
New Zealand	3.54	3.54	.00	<1	.000	3.16	3.30	-.14	<1	.001
Slovenia	3.42	3.43	.00	<1	.000	3.60	2.44	1.17	89.47***	.087
Total	3.28	3.00	.28	149.99***	.014	3.28	3.20	.08	7.99**	.001

*Note:* Countries are ranked as a function of effect size (difference of national identification levels between majorities and minorities). Means are corrected for the effects of age, gender and education level. Ethnic identification was not measured in Great Britain and Latvia.

\*\*\* =  $p < .001$ . \*\* =  $p < .01$ . \* =  $p < .05$ .

A different and less coherent picture emerges for levels of ethnic identification<sup>1</sup>. In four out of eleven countries (Slovenia, Czech Republic, Russia and Germany), majority groups had higher levels of ethnic identification than minority groups. In North-American countries (Canada and U.S.), the opposite pattern was observed: minorities had higher levels of ethnic identification than majorities. In the three remaining countries (Slovak Republic, Bulgaria and New Zealand), the differences were not significant. Overall, majorities express a slightly higher level of ethnic identification ( $M = 3.28$ ) than minorities ( $M = 3.20$ ), but this difference is very small. These results suggest that there is no systematic pattern of the importance majority and minority groups attach to ethnic subgroup membership, but that this difference is to a large extent contingent upon contextual and historical factors.

#### *Relationship between National and Ethnic Identification*

A series of regression analyses were performed in order to test the second prediction that a positive relationship between subgroup and superordinate identities should be observed for majorities, and that this relationship should be less positive for minorities. First, within each of the nine national contexts, the majority and the minority groups were analysed separately. Ethnic identification was the dependent variable, and national identification was entered into the regression equation as the main independent variable, along with the control variables of age, sex and education level. Table 3 shows the unstandardised regression coefficients. As expected, results show that in 8 out of 9 majority groups, the relation between ethnic and national identification was significantly positive. For minorities, in contrast, we found two positive (Bulgaria and Russia), two negative (Canada and U.S.), and three non-significant relations between subgroup and superordinate identities (Germany, Czech Republic, and Slovak Republic). New Zealand and Slovene minorities were not analysed due to the low number of minority respondents.

In a second step, a series of slope analyses tested whether the relationships between ethnic and national identification were significantly different in minority and majority groups (Aiken and West, 1991). An interaction term was computed as the product of subgroup status (minority or majority) and national identification. In order to test the null hypothesis that regression coefficients were the same across minority and majority groups, the interaction term was entered in the equation after the main effects of group membership and national identification (again controlling for the effects of

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<sup>1</sup> Latvia and Great Britain are not included because of missing ethnic identification measures.

sex, age, and education level). Regression analyses were performed separately for each of the seven national contexts where minorities and majorities could be compared.

**Table 3**  
*Ethnic Identification Regressed Upon National Identification*  
*(Unstandardised Coefficients) with Slope Tests*

	Majorities		Minorities		Slope test	Natives	
	B	SE	B	SE	t	B	SE
Germany	.63***	.03	-.22	.22	-7.93***		
Canada	.09	.05	-.25***	.04	-4.75***		
U.S.	.13**	.05	-.19*	.09	-2.42*	.19	.15
New Zealand	.31***	.05	--	--	--	.42***	.09
Bulgaria	.26***	.02	.17*	.08	-1.70		
Czech Republic	.18***	.04	-.34	.19	-3.94***		
Russia	.35***	.03	.35*	.13	<1		
Slovenia	.29***	.03	--	--	--		
Slovak Republic	.25***	.03	.06	.07	-2.59*		
Total	.37***	.01	-.09**	.03	-15.80***		

\*\*\* =  $p < .001$ . \*\* =  $p < .01$ . \* =  $p < .05$ .

Inspection of Table 3 indicates that in 5 out of 7 analyses the interaction effect was significant in the predicted direction: the link between ethnic and national identification was more positive for majorities than for minorities. The powerful overall effect underlined the consistency of these findings,  $t(8743) = -15.80$ ,  $p < .001$ . Thus, the asymmetry between national minorities and majorities is clearly reflected in the patterns of subgroup and superordinate identification.

Finally, the two native groups were analysed separately. While the relationship between ethnic and national identification was positive for both Maoris and American Indians, it was significant only for the Maoris. Yet, these results suggest that the relationship natives establish with the nation is closer to a majority than a minority pattern. This effect may be due to strong feelings of national entitlement of natives and considerations that the nation represents an ancestral homeland.

*Levels of Xenophobia as a Function of Minority-Majority Status*

We now move to the analyses concerned with xenophobic attitudes of minority and majority members. In order to test the third prediction that majorities express a higher level of xenophobia than minorities, Table 4 presents mean levels of xenophobia (corrected for the effects of age, gender, and education level) for minorities and majorities. The results show that in 6 out of 11 national contexts, majority members hold more negative attitudes towards immigrants than minority members. The largest difference is observed in Latvia, presumably reflecting the difficult relationship between Latvia and Russia (all Latvian minority members are of Russian origin). In Great Britain, the Slovak Republic, New Zealand, the U.S. and Russia, majority members are also more xenophobic than minorities. The overall effect underlines the discrepancy between minorities and majorities when it comes to negative intergroup attitudes.

**Table 4**  
*Mean Levels of Xenophobia as a Function of National Status*

	Majorities	Minorities	<i>Difference</i>	F	$\eta^2$
Latvia	3.99	3.01	.98	160.8***	.196
Great Britain	3.27	2.88	.39	11.3**	.012
Slovak Republic	3.73	3.52	.21	10.9**	.009
New Zealand	2.92	2.63	.29	4.9*	.007
U.S.	3.13	2.96	.17	5.1*	.006
Russia	3.52	3.35	.17	4.8*	.004
Slovenia	3.58	3.39	.20	1.4	.002
Bulgaria	3.89	3.92	-.03	<1	.000
Canada	2.63	2.61	.02	<1	.000
Czech Republic	3.67	3.72	-.06	<1	.000
West Germany	3.14	3.08	.06	<1	.000
Total	3.41	3.19	.22	50.4***	.000

*Note:* Countries are ranked as a function of effect size (difference of xenophobia levels between majorities and minorities). A positive difference indicates higher xenophobia for majorities. Means are corrected for the effects of age, gender and education level.

\*\*\* =  $p < .001$ . \*\* =  $p < .01$ . \* =  $p < .05$ .

In addition, we also compared the two native groups separately to the respective minorities and majorities. Contrast analyses revealed that Maoris in New Zealand ( $M = 3.21$ ) had higher levels of xenophobia than minorities ( $M = 2.63$ ),  $p < .001$ , and also higher levels of xenophobia than majorities ( $M = 2.93$ ),  $p < .001$ . Native Indians in the U.S., in turn, expressed higher levels of xenophobia ( $M = 3.24$ ) than U.S. minorities ( $M = 2.97$ ),  $p < .05$ , but the difference with the U.S. majority ( $M = 3.13$ ) was not significant. These results suggest that native populations, much like national majorities, have more negative attitudes towards immigrants than other minorities, and sometimes even more negative attitudes than the majorities themselves.

### *Predicting Xenophobia*

Due to overlapping forms of ethnic and national identification, ethnic identification was expected to lead to higher levels of xenophobia for majorities, but not for minorities. In order to test this fourth hypothesis, two regression analyses were performed on all minorities and all majorities separately (Table 5). Xenophobia was the dependent variable, and ethnic and national identification the main independent variables. National variation was controlled by entering countries as dummy variables (with Slovenia as the reference category). Again, effects for age, sex, and education level were controlled for.

**Table 5**

*Ethnic and National Identification Regressed upon Xenophobia for National Majorities and Minorities (Unstandardised Coefficients), with Slope Tests*

	Majorities			Minorities			Slope test
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>t</i>
Ethnic ID	.09	.01	7.34***	-.09	.03	-2.74**	-5.61***
National ID	.04	.01	3.47**	-.06	.03	-2.07*	-2.86**

*Note:* Effects of ethnic ID and national ID on Xenophobia are controlled for country, sex, age, and education level (coefficients not shown). Slovenia was used as reference category.  
 \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ . \*\* =  $p < .01$ . \* =  $p < .05$ .

Results revealed the expected pattern. For majorities, both ethnic and national identification were positively linked to xenophobia. For minorities, in contrast, both forms of identification predicted, although quite weakly, lower levels of xenophobia. Slope tests were then carried out to test whether the relationships between identification and xenophobia were different in minorities and majorities. Results show that for both ethnic and national identification, the difference was significant.

*Mediation*

Finally, if there is an overlap in ethnic and national identifications for majorities, we would expect ethnic identification to support national identification. In order to test the final prediction that ethnic identification mediates the impact of national identification on xenophobia for majorities, but not for minorities, two mediation analyses were performed, with xenophobia as the dependent variable, national identification as the independent variable, and ethnic identification as the mediating variable.

Figure 1. Mediation analyses on majorities (N = 7217) and on minorities (N = 1016)

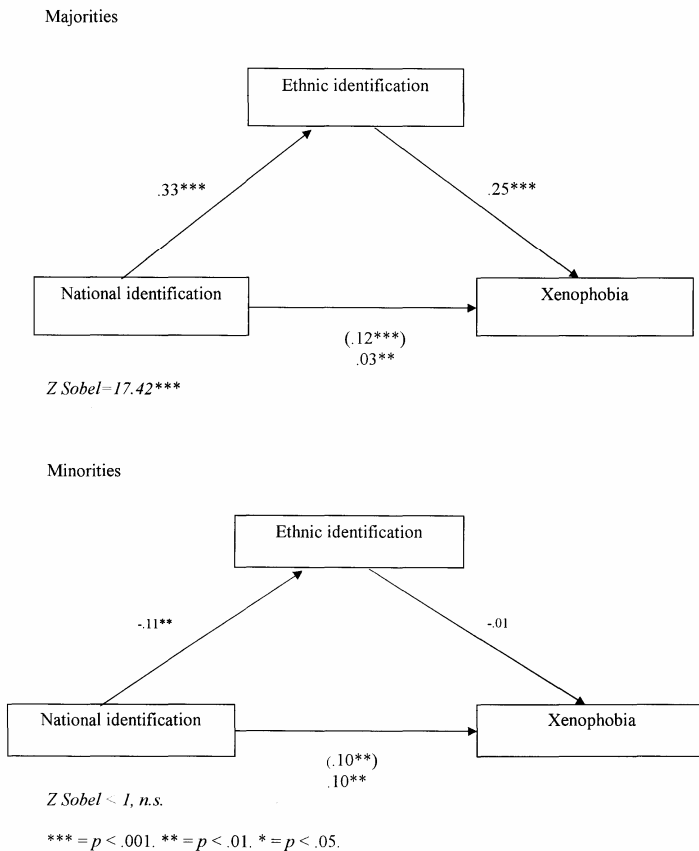


Figure 1 gives the results for majority and minority groups, respectively. The findings provide support for the asymmetry prediction: ethnic identification has a strong mediating role between national identification and

xenophobia, but only for majorities. For minorities, in contrast, the relationship between national and ethnic identification is negative, no relationship between ethnic identification and xenophobia is observed, and thus there is no mediation.

### **Discussion**

Overall, the findings of this study demonstrate that asymmetry between ethno-national subgroups within national categories plays an important role in shaping ingroup identification and outgroup attitudes. In line with predictions, we have first shown that ethnic majorities tended to identify more strongly with the nation than ethnic minorities, although a number of exceptions to this trend were also observed. The pattern concerning ethnic identification was more variable. In Canada and the U.S., minorities were more attached to their respective ethnic groups than majorities. In the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Russia and West Germany, however, the inverse pattern was observed: ethnic majorities were more identified with their respective groups than minorities. In addition, it is worth noting that majorities of small countries (e.g., Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovenia) tended to express a stronger sense of ethnic identity than majority citizens of large countries made up by a variety of ethnic subgroups (U.S., Canada, Russia).

Subgroup asymmetry was also evidenced in the analysis of the relationship between ethnic and national identification. As expected, we found that for all but one majority group (in Canada), this relationship was significantly positive, whereas it was negative for U.S. and Canadian minorities, unrelated for German, Czech and Slovak minorities, and positive for Bulgarian and Russian minorities. In five out of seven national contexts, the prediction of a significant difference of the ethnic-national relationship between minorities and majorities was confirmed.

The two native groups, the American Indians and the Maoris, expressed similar patterns of identification as the respective majority groups. They can therefore clearly be distinguished from other ethnic minority groups. Although it is difficult to know the exact reasons for this discrepancy between native and other minority groups, one important possibility seems to be that native groups feel a strong attachment to their ancestral homeland which they see as "theirs". Hence, much like majorities, native groups are likely to link their identities to territories, and lay claim to ownership of the nation (Brubaker, 1996). Contrary to majorities, however, a native sense of ownership is mostly symbolic, since natives have only limited or no control over national institutions (see Herrera, 2004, for another comparison between natives and minority and majority group in the Canadian context).



Further results indicated that overall majority groups were more xenophobic than minority groups, although this difference was significant in only 6 out of 11 national contexts. Yet, minorities were never more hostile against immigrants than majorities. Controlling for the effects of national membership, both ethnic and national identification predicted xenophobic attitudes for majorities only. For minorities, the reverse pattern was found, albeit with less powerful effects: the more minority members identify with their ethnic group or their nation, the more positive their attitudes towards immigrants.

We also found that ethnic identification was a stronger predictor of xenophobia for majorities. This finding suggests that ethnic subgroup identification was more relevant than national identification in the prediction of negative intergroup attitudes. The results of the mediation analyses clarify these results, and sum up the difference between ethnic majorities and minorities. Insofar as immigrants can potentially become members of a nation, but not of an ethnic group, one would expect national identification to precede ethnic identification as a predictor of xenophobic attitudes. The results show that this is the case for majorities only for whom the driving force behind xenophobia was ethnic identification which mediated the impact of national identification on xenophobia. No such mediation was found for minorities where only national identification predicted xenophobia. These results lend support for the ingroup projection model (Mummendey and Wenzel, 1999; Waldzus and Mummendey, 2004) inasmuch as they suggest that majorities cognitively connect their ethnic subgroup to the superordinate national group. Indirectly, hostility towards immigrants reflects the tendency that majorities express a stronger sense of entitlement to the nation, its institutions, rules and customs. Hence, they feel more inclined to “protect the nation” against immigrants who are viewed as a threat to the ethnic group rather than to the nation as a whole.

## **Conclusion**

Our findings underscore the importance of analysing xenophobia and prejudice from a perspective of nested intergroup relations which combines processes occurring *within* superordinate categories and *between* subgroups. The minority or majority status of ethnic subgroups within nations shapes attitudes towards outgroups such as immigrants. The main thrust of our findings is consistent with the asymmetry hypothesis of ethnic subgroups within national contexts (Sidanius and Petrocik, 2001). Overall, these findings suggest that for dominant ethno-cultural majorities there is an unproblematic and positive association between attachment to one's

nation and attachment to one's ethnic subgroup. On average, majorities hold more hostile attitudes towards immigrants than ethnic minorities, and their ethnic and national identification predicts xenophobia. Subordinate minorities, in contrast, have a more complicated relationship with the nation. For them, ethno-cultural identification is largely orthogonal to national attachment, and refers to two relatively independent dimensions of identity and self-definition.

In coming to these conclusions, we must note that the identification measures used in the ISSP survey are not ideal for a definitive test of some of these hypotheses, since single-item indicators may be subject to various biases. Moreover, another important shortcoming of this research concerns the sampling of the minority groups. Other than the typical immigration countries and clearly multi-ethnic societies, the dataset often contained an inadequate number of minority group members who were long-time residents and legal citizens of the country. As a result, many countries had to be discarded from the analyses. Future surveys studying attitudes towards multiculturalism and nationhood should contain more elaborate identification measures and use ethno-cultural group membership as a stratification criterion in order to sample an appropriate number of resident non-majority members in each country.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that nationhood and ethno-cultural attachment are historical processes that evolve and take on different forms and meanings over time (Brubaker, 1996). Only continued survey research under a range of systematically different circumstances will allow us to disentangle the historical, structural and psychological factors underlying the attitudes towards one's national and ethnic group on the one hand and immigrant groups on the other.

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