

Eric Kaufmann | March 2017

'RACIAL SELF-INTEREST' IS NOT RACISM

Ethno-demographic interests and the
immigration debate

About the Author

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Executive Summary

The growing success of right-wing populism in the West feeds off those who dislike ethnic change, alienating them from those who embrace it. Previous research, and Trump's deployment of 'political correctness' as a red flag for conservative voters, suggests accusations of racism levelled at anti-immigration parties and voters contributes to conservatives' mistrust of elites.¹ Shadi Hamid of the Brookings Institution is an influential Muslim-American writer who argues that it is important to distinguish racism and racial self-interest, and that Trump supporters, who voted in a racially self-interested way to limit immigration, should not be accused of racism.² David Goodhart adds that the term racism has been subject to mission creep such that those in public debate cannot draw a distinction between group partiality and a racism based on the fear, hatred or disparagement of outgroups. In his words, 'we need to distinguish more clearly between the greater comfort people often feel among familiar people and places and active hostility towards outsider ethnic groups.'³

Using survey and qualitative data, this work shows that a majority of American and British people of all races believe that when the white majority seeks lower immigration to help maintain their population share, this is racially self-interested rather than racist behaviour. This distinction is important because racism is a taboo, whereas ethnic self-interest, like individual self-interest, is viewed as a normal. It doesn't pack the same emotive punch and thus is more likely to provoke debate than division.

The racism/racial self-interest distinction matters. White conservatives whose immigration stance is influenced by a desire to slow decline in their group's share of the population rather than due to an irrational fear of outgroups, feel accused of racism. This breeds resentment. My research on Trump, Clinton, Brexit and Remain voters shows that white liberals are especially likely to level the racism charge at whites who desire fewer immigrants to maintain their group's demographic position. Meanwhile, too many white conservatives accuse minorities who want more of 'their own' to immigrate of being racist. However, when presented with questions about both whites and minorities wanting to

adjust immigration policies in their favour, and when asked to justify their pattern of responses, both liberals and conservatives converge toward bipartisanship. Here, perhaps, is common ground that can bring the two sides together.

Key Findings

- Only a **minority** of American and British respondents consider it racist for people to want immigration reduced or selectively increased to give their group a demographic advantage. A majority of **all racial backgrounds** consider this a racially self-interested rather than racist preference.
- White Americans are somewhat more likely to consider white majority own-group immigration preferences racist (32%) than white British people (24%).
- People's definition of what is racist varies greatly by ideology and partisanship. In particular, **there is wide partisan disagreement** over the question of whether it is racist to use ethno-demographic reasoning to determine immigration policy preferences. Whether you are a Trump or Clinton supporter, a Leaver or Remainer, pro- or anti-immigration – **matters a lot more than your race** for whether you perceive a group-based immigration preference to be racist. On the question of whether it is racist for whites to restrict immigration, the Trump-Clinton divide within white America and pro/anti-immigration divide within white Britain **stretches to 70 points**.
- **Liberals, especially white American liberals, are more inconsistent** in their view of which immigration preferences are racist than conservatives. They are also more likely than conservatives to call ethnic preferences racist despite the fact the questions explicitly state people's immigration preferences are driven by ethno-demographic interests, not an irrational fear or hatred of the other.
- Whether such preferences are considered racist or group self-interested depends on whether the question refers to **whites or minorities**, but especially hinges on whether it pertains to immigration being reduced or selectively increased. **Many white liberals who consider black restrictionists to be racist do not think the same of whites who want more immigrants from Europe to bolster the white share.**
- **Inconsistency drops dramatically when asked: about all groups, about increasing and decreasing immigration and when asked to justify choices.** In these instances, far more people view own-group preferences as racial self-interest rather than racism, and there is much greater **bipartisan agreement**.
- White Americans are more biased than non-white Americans in their evaluations of whether immigration preferences are racist. The reverse seems true in Britain, though the sample of minorities in the British YouGov survey is quite small.

- Partisan differences matter more for white Americans than non-white Americans on the racism-immigration question. That is, bias is stronger within white than non-white America.
- **Immigration policy preferences among whites in both countries are closely related to their views on whether it is racist for whites to want immigration reduced for ethno-demographic reasons. This suggests a shift in what whites consider racist** could have considerable implications for immigration attitudes and, therefore, policy.
- Brexit, Trump and the West European populist right are **cultural phenomena** which demand cultural solutions rather than traditional policy tools.⁴ This data suggests that **group interests should be more openly aired** alongside wider national interests in formulating immigration policy. Pro-immigration forces should **avoid using charges of racism to side-line discussions of ethno-demographic interests**. Instead, they should accept the importance of cultural concerns but argue positively for immigration on humanitarian, national-interest or liberal grounds. They should cite assimilation data to reassure anxious majorities.⁵ Redefining the immigration-racism nexus away from its current expansive application could draw the toxic sting from the immigration issue, defusing a key source of white grievance and right-wing populism. It could also help restore the credibility and effectiveness of a narrower, more targeted, antiracist taboo.⁶

We conducted two surveys in association with YouGov, one in the US, one in Britain. Headline numbers from the survey are:

- 73% of white Clinton voters say a white American who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist, but just 11% of white Trump voters agree.
- 47% of white British Remain voters say a white Briton who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist, but just 5% of white British Leave voters agree
- 73% of white Clinton voters say a White American who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist, but just 18% say a Latino or Asian American who wants to increase immigration from Latin America or Asia to boost her group's share of the population is being racist
- 66% of white British pro-immigration voters say a white Briton who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist, but just 3% of white British anti-immigration voters agree

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Introduction

The immigration debate takes place in a public square alive to charges of racism. When voicing conservative views on immigration, many in the West feel a 'cultural cringe'. They worry about violating social norms against racism, not just in front of others, but even in their private thoughts, where their 'generalised other,' in the words of psychologist George Herbert Mead, stands in judgement.

The twentieth century bore witness to colonial and Nazi genocide. African-Americans were deprived of their civil rights until the mid-1960s and until World War II could be randomly lynched by white mobs. Given this backcloth, an antiracism norm is needed in a just society, and rapidly took hold in the West in the 1960s. Norms are self-fulfilling. The more who buy into them, the more evangelists there are for the new norms; fence-sitters become aware this is the consensus and join in, creating a cascade. This explains why new attitudes can 'tip' to become the norm very quickly. Opposing views only persist in isolated generational or geographic pockets or at the ideological margins.

Paul Krugman recalls that one summer, around 1965, large homes on Long Island suddenly repainted their little statues of coachmen from black to white in order not to typecast African-Americans in subservient roles. In Britain, a similarly rapid change concerned the deplorable racism of fans hurling bananas at opposing teams' black players. In the 1980s, this behaviour became unacceptable. A similar shift has occurred more recently in regard to homosexuality. Political campaigns make a difference, but the spread of norms is often dependent on emergent, peer-to-peer, self-fulfilling dynamics that lead to tipping points.

Norms are not simply about the fine points of law and political philosophy. They engage emotions of guilt, shame and disgust. They are highly charged. As Norbert Elias remarks, in medieval times it was acceptable to urinate in the open at dinner.⁷ In some societies, polygamy or pederasty have been acceptable. These behaviours are now regarded as disgusting or immoral and violate social taboos. Is the same true for racism in relation to immigration preferences? That is, is it disgusting to want less immigration to help maintain the size of an ethnic majority? Perhaps.

But the unfolding of the logic of group equality that led to the taboo is not straightforward. The emergence of an antiracism taboo raises the question, 'what is racism?'. In other words, what are the boundaries of the concept. When 'the People' replaced the divine right of kings as the source of political legitimacy in France in 1789, the first question raised was 'Who are "the People"?' In other words, where are the cultural and physical boundaries between Frenchmen and others? After the first phase of the Revolution, France introduced a clearer demarcation between citizens and non-citizens and defined its borders more sharply. In this report, we'll see that the answer to the question, 'what is racism' is still contested, with liberals cleaving to a far more expansive definition than conservatives.

Movement activists recognise how vital it is to plug into social taboos in order to triumph. Just as conservatives stretch labels such as 'un-American' or 'anti-family' well beyond the objects for which these terms make sense, those on the left understand that antiracist norms confer the power to advance an agenda of weakening stronger groups and strengthening weaker ones. Yet there is a danger in this strategy: applying the norm beyond the bounds of the empirically-sensible risks turning antiracism into a political football, blunting its effectiveness in precisely those sectors of society where it is most needed.

In Goodhart's words, 'To describe as racist what many ordinary citizens regard as reasonable anxieties about rapid change is simply wrong, and a cause of great resentment... the well-meaning attempt to override the human instinct to notice difference creates much greater sensitivity to and self-consciousness about race. Surely, rather than making strenuous efforts to avoid noticing difference, it is better to notice it and feel at ease with it.'⁸ As this study reveals, there is consensus over some definitions of racism – most agree that someone who does not want to live next to a person of a different race is racist - but also wide areas of disagreement based on ideology. The biggest partisan divides revolve around whether it is legitimate for people to seek to bolster the demographic position of their ethnic group. Immigration policy is a key battleground.

The expansion of antiracism to encompass opposition to immigration occurred as part of a package that included reforms designed to counter more obvious manifestations of racism such as the denial of voting rights to African-Americans or complete bars on non-white immigration. Yet the time is approaching when demographic shifts force a confrontation with this expansion of antiracism's remit. Better to revisit it, and adjust, before this confrontation occurs. Antiracist overreach on the immigration question arguably underlies the populist western backlash against elites. Cultural conservatives care deeply about the effects of immigration and resent being told their thoughts and voting behaviour are racist. They hold elites responsible for enforcing antiracist norms - in the workplace, government and mainstream media - beyond the bounds of what they consider appropriate.

It is undeniable that this played a role in Donald Trump's success. First of all, Trump used the phrase 'political correctness' repeatedly to deflect criticism of untruthful or defamatory remarks, as with his comments about Mexico sending criminals to the US or all Muslims being suspect. Second, data from the 2016 American National Election Study (ANES) pilot survey, fielded in January 2016, shows that under 6% of Trump-supporting white Americans agree that 'the way people talk needs to change with the times to be more sensitive to people from different backgrounds.' Instead, 71% claimed 'people are much too easily offended.' By contrast, among white Trump detractors, just 24% said 'people are much too easily offended.' This is a threefold difference, representing an opinion gap of nearly 50 points.⁹ A similar-sized divide exists over whether immigration should be reduced or not. Justin Gest, in his work on the white working-class in Barking and Dagenham, England and Youngstown, Ohio, finds racism to be a

major source of anti-elite animus: 'Racism is... a 'mute button' pressed on someone while they are still crying out about a sense of loss—from a position of historic privilege, frequently in terms they have difficulty articulating. Therefore, the preface 'I'm not racist' is not a disclaimer but an exhortation to listen and not dismiss the claims of a purportedly new minority.' Nancy Pemberton, one of Gest's working-class Barking respondents, goes further, stating: 'I think the anti-racists have made it worse. They look for trouble. They construe everything as racist...These people are ruining our country. And we're the only ones who can be racist.'¹⁰

The antiracist norm is bound up with immigration since inflows tend to bring those of minority racial or ethnic backgrounds into a country. This implies a shift in a nation-state's ethnic composition to the disadvantage of the ethnic majority. One way of winning legitimacy for immigration is to argue that immigration strengthens the nation, which in turn reflects well on the ethnic majority. This is because ethnic majorities like the English tend to view 'their' nation-states, i.e. Britain, as an extension of themselves. This was the strategy adopted by France, a demographic laggard, from the Napoleonic period through to World War II. Immigration was encouraged on the understanding that its costs were offset by economic and military benefits. This thinking accepts that immigration carries a cultural cost, but claims this is justified in the name of the nation.

A second route is to use the antiracist norm to quell majority disquiet. This has been the favoured approach in western countries since the 1960s and is, I would argue, a riskier strategy.¹¹ The connection between racism and immigration restriction gained traction during the cultural upheavals of the 1960s when it prompted an elite-led reform of ethnically-selective immigration laws in the US, Canada and Australasia. I have shown elsewhere that these notions emerged in American progressive circles in the 1910s but took a long time to penetrate beyond them. When Harry Truman declaimed against the ethnically-selective 1924 National Origins immigration act in 1952 as 'utterly unworthy of our ideals' and contrary to the New Testament and Declaration of Independence, his entreaties persuaded few. Even though he only referred to disadvantaged categories of *European* immigrant, such as Italians or Greeks, Congress reaffirmed the provisions of 1924 and enacted the even more restrictive McCarran-Walter Act.¹² At this stage, antiracism norms lacked the bite needed to constrain immigration policy.

Today things are different, but the consensus is breaking down as ethnic majorities decline and, with them, the confident spirit that bred the view that majority cultural preferences are not permitted in discussions of immigration policy. As we shall see, many liberal voters – especially in America, but also in Britain – perceive immigration restriction as racist. But does this cornerstone of western liberalism rest on a consistent set of normative principles?

David Goodhart suggests otherwise. 'Imagine someone who identifies loosely with their own ethnic group,' he writes, and 'wishes to live in an area where the group is predominant.' This person 'is not a race "purist" and holds no negative views of other groups. Today, such a person is generally considered racist. And that is why, at least until recently, opposition to large-scale immigration would have been regarded as racist by many people, especially on the left.' Goodhart claims that the arrival of European immigrants in large numbers has made it acceptable to talk about immigration, attenuating the connection between racism and immigration. Yet the taboo hangs in the background. It is not difficult to find many in the media accusing anti-immigration forces of racism. For instance, Zack Beauchamp at Vox and David Aaronovitch of the *Times* both too easily characterise anti-immigration Trump voters as racist.¹³

The charge of racism compels those whose true motivations are ethnic to couch them in economic terms. In one focus group run as part of my ESRC-Demos research, a lady complained of the Croydon (UK) tramlink that 'I might have been the only English person on that tram... I didn't like it... I could have been in a foreign country' was challenged by another participant who asked, 'Why should that affect you that there's minorities on the [tram]?' The woman swiftly changed her narrative to a more acceptable, economic, form of opposition to immigration: 'It doesn't affect me. It, um... I've got grandchildren and children... I don't think things are going to get any better or easier for them, to get work.' In other words, economic but not ethnocultural concerns about immigration are considered legitimate subjects for public debate.¹⁴ This produces dishonest debate rather than a frank and rational exchange between people of all backgrounds - realising they share similar ethnic motivations and must reach an accommodation that is fair to all.

If this doesn't happen, there is a growing likelihood western politics will be riven by polarization as societies grow more diverse. Liberals refuse on moral grounds to hear majority ethnic concerns while conservatives feel they are being muzzled by political correctness. That is, politics may come to be divided between those who accept the logic connecting anti-immigration with racism and those who reject it as an illegitimate extension of antiracism's remit. For the latter, the antiracism-immigration nexus represents an unwarranted stretching of a social taboo - designed to silence dissent so the ethnic majority may be reduced and society transformed against the wishes of its conservative inhabitants. In the hands of the far right, this can rapidly take the form of conspiracy theories about deliberate 'white genocide'. All the more reason to become, ironically, 'politically-correct' in our use of the term racism, applying it judiciously rather than as a catchall for any expression of majority ethnicity.

For the purposes of this report, the central question concerns motivation. Do restrictionists fear, hate or look down upon those of other ethnic backgrounds? If the answer is yes, they are racist by any definition of the term. Or is it the case that immigration skeptics are majority ethnic partisans who are acting in what Shadi Hamid terms their 'racial self-interest': seeking to maximise the

demographic advantage of their group. In an important essay in the *Washington Post*, Hamid argues that were he a white American, he could imagine voting for Trump for the same reasons many in the Middle East vote for ethno-sectarian parties: to advance their group's demographic and political heft:

White nationalism or white identity politics overlap with racism, but they are not quite the same thing. After all, if I was a member of the so-called "white working class" rather than an American Muslim, I can't be sure I wouldn't have voted for Trump. This may make me a flawed person or even, as some would have it, a "racist." But it would also make me rational, voting if not in my economic self-interest then at least in my emotional self-interest.¹⁵

Do white majorities despise and fear the 'other' or are they engaged in the ignoble but time-honoured pursuit of what American economist Milica Bookman terms the 'demographic struggle for power.'¹⁶ Perhaps both are at work.

In his article, Hamid urges American liberals to stop stigmatizing white Americans who identify with their racial group. He adds that the minority identity politics practiced by the Democrats has rebounded in the guise of white identity politics. This situation, he notes, will only intensify as whites become a minority in the US. Already, over half of American newborns are Hispanic, Black or Asian. The arrival of 'majority minority' America, writes Hamid, far from being the cause for celebration lauded by most Democrats, will exacerbate the divisions thrown up by the 2016 election.

In a similar vein, social psychologist and centrist Jonathan Haidt urges Democrats not to demonize Trump voters but to understand how the world looks from their vantage point.¹⁷ This is not to condone unreason. It is surely right to tackle untruths such as Obama being Muslim, but if liberals are guilty of 'motivated reasoning' around questions of racism and immigration then – in the interests of equity – this, too, must be exposed. For if supporters of right-wing populism feel mainstream outlets condone liberal conspiracy theories but not conservative ones, it will be impossible to win their support in the battle for truth, reason and evidence-based policy.

Hamid nicely dissects the portmanteau concept of racism, insisting on the important difference between racial self-interest, a form of group partiality Max Weber might classify as 'substantively rational,' and racism. I would echo Hamid and Goodhart in the need to reserve the latter for irrational feelings about other racial groups: fear, hatred, disgust, lazy stereotypes or a perception of the other as less intelligent. In addition, a belief that one's own group must be kept 'pure' is irrational because, genetically, there are no pure races.¹⁸

Beyond this, however, we must accept that groups will look out for their cultural, economic and demographic interests. Here we are in the realm of group partiality, even clannishness, which, however lamentable, does not deserve the 'racist' appellation. While minority partiality is not usually considered racist, whites who express racially self-interested sentiment often are. As Hamid notes, blurring the

lines between white racial self-interest and white racism carries the risk that majority-group members who express group sentiments are stigmatised. They are backed into the 'bad' corner by 'elite' liberal moral guardians. This opens the door to a politics of anger and resentment that populists minister to. It also, by clouding reason and truth, erodes an important bulwark against 'post-truth' politics. For, just as elements of the right are irrational about issues such as Obama's birthplace, the left – as we shall see – can be irrational about racism and immigration.

As Goodhart writes, indicators of racism show persistent decline in surveys, but many 'critical race' theorists insist it has mutated, adopting new, 'hidden' guises. The problem is that such arguments are unfalsifiable and thus do not lend themselves to Popperian science. Qualitative research is valid and important, but because 'trading anecdotes' is a risk in low-N research, qualitative work relies on viewpoint diversity to provide a check on the selective use of evidence. Such diversity does not exist in much of the critical race field due to a climate of consensus and a paucity of skeptics to contest the white privilege and hidden racism theses. Hidden racism may be real, but we need skeptics to test the robustness of the theory and granularity of the concept. Thus, for this field, quantitative research is necessary to substantiate claims. Marie-Anne Valfort, David Laitin and colleagues, for instance, find that in France, Senegalese with Christian first names are two and a half times more likely to be called for interview than Senegalese with Muslim given names.¹⁹ More of this kind of work – rather than ideologically-motivated or unexamined assertions of 'white privilege,' – is required to substantiate the charge that whites who oppose immigration act from racist convictions.

'Actually existing people are rooted in communities and families, often experience change as loss and have a hierarchy of moral obligations,' writes Goodhart. 'People will always favour their own families and communities; it is the job of a mature liberalism to reconcile such feelings with a relaxed sense of racial equality. People are not going to stop noticing group difference; it is not in our nature to...Linking such ordinary low-level stereotyping so casually in our language to overt hostility based on race is damaging.'²⁰

Group partiality is certainly problematic. For example, the inability of Baganda and non-Baganda in Uganda or Flemish and Walloons in Belgium to agree on how to share wealth demonstrates why people should weigh the wider interests of the entire nation alongside that of their group. Yet to call group-interested sentiments racist is to deprive the 'racist' epithet of force. Were this true then most of Northern Ireland's people – over 90% vote for ethnic parties who prioritise their group's interests before that of Northern Ireland – are racist. Real racism exists and is dangerous. All the more reason to refine the term, using it precisely rather than permitting it to be stretched by political entrepreneurs raising the spectre of fascist violence whenever members of an ethnic majority seek to defend group interests. 'The point is precisely to cordon off racism as far as possible into a place where everyone can recognise it and reject it,' says

Goodhart. 'Then place linguistic and intellectual barriers between it and other forms of thought and behaviour that may involve race but are not racist.'²¹

In addition, in order to arrive at a consistent position, all forms of group partiality must be judged against the same metric. As communitarian political theorist Yael Tamir writes:

Liberals often align themselves with national demands raised by 'underdogs,' be they indigenous peoples, discriminated minorities, or occupied nations, whose plight can easily evoke sympathy. But if national claims rest on theoretically sound and morally justified grounds, one cannot restrict their application: They apply equally to all nations, regardless of their power, their wealth, their history of suffering, or even the injustices they have inflicted on others in the past.²²

The Study

Unfortunately, as results of my Policy Exchange/YouGov survey of over 1600 British and 2600 Americans reveals, people see racism and immigration through the 'looking glass' of ideology and partisanship. Three-quarters of white liberals in America, and half in Britain, consider whites who seek to maintain their population share by backing immigration restriction to be racist. At the same time, most view minorities who want more immigration to boost their group share to be acting in their group's self-interest. For conservatives, the reverse is true: minorities who wish to increase their numbers through immigration of their 'own' are more likely to be viewed as racist than whites who want reductions for the same reason. However, especially in America, the extent of bias – scholars term it 'motivated reasoning'²³ – is larger for white liberals than conservatives.

Mapping the Racism-Immigration Nexus

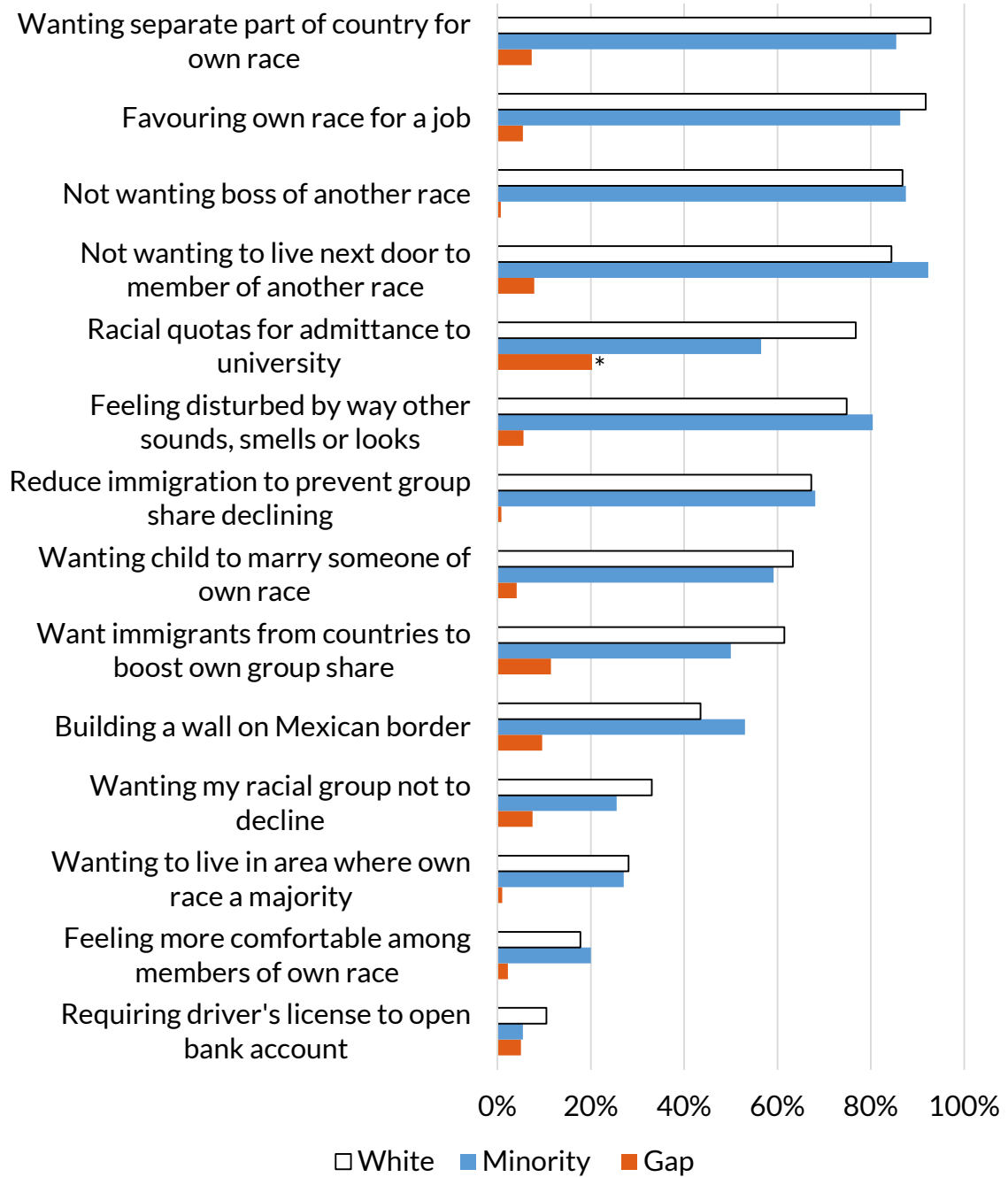
Before discussing the full YouGov/Policy Exchange survey results, let's examine a small pilot survey of around 200 Americans using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to map the contours of antiracism in the United States. MTurk's sample is skewed toward secular white liberals, but our interest here is to compare groups so this does not present too much of a problem. For a set of statements, we asked people to indicate whether the statement is a) racist, b) not racist, or c) don't know. Excluding don't knows yields the results in figure 1. The first thing the table shows is how much whites and minorities agree on what is and isn't racist. The only significant difference is over whether racial quotas to determine university admissions are racist, and even here, a majority of both minorities (57%) and whites (77%) agree that quotas are racist.

Consensus: White and Minority Views of Racism

Figure 1 shows that most respondents, even among this relatively liberal sample, don't think it is racist to feel more comfortable among members of one's own 'race' (defined by US census categories) or to want to live in an area in which one's own race is in the majority. Trump's proposal to build a wall on the border with Mexico divides opinion, though a slim majority – even in this heavily Democratic sample - say this too is not racist. Importantly, there is no statistically significant gap between whites and minorities on whether the Wall is racist. Most also felt it is not racist to want your group not to decline, though more whites (33%) felt this to be racist than minorities (26%). What is striking, though, is that while most thought it permissible to want one's group not to decline, actively seeking to stop this by encouraging selective immigration or wanting to reduce immigration was considered racist by a clear majority of this relatively liberal sample. For instance, 62% of whites say it is racist to wish to encourage immigration from certain parts of the world to boost one's group share and 67% say the same about reducing immigration to maintain group share. The numbers are 50% and 68% for minorities, but this was not a statistically significant difference (though with a larger dataset a significant difference could emerge).

Figure 1.

Do you think the following are racist?
 (white vs minority) MTurk (relatively Democratic) sample



Source: Amazon Mechanical Turk survey. N=155-192. *Statistically significant difference between whites and minorities at the $p < .05$ level.

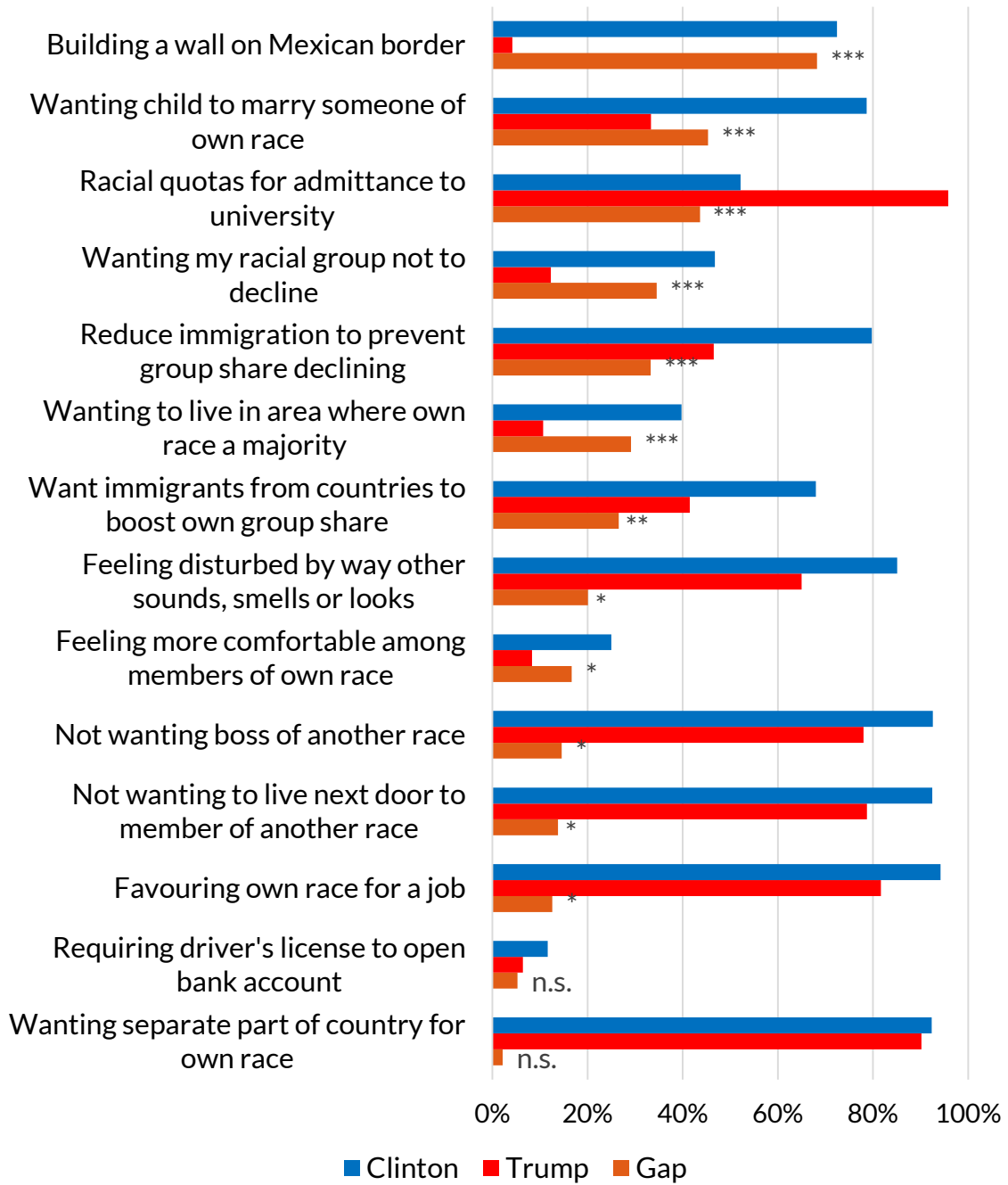
Polarisation: Partisanship and Anti-Racism

Figure 1 showed that whites and minorities in the US place the racism/non-racism boundary in roughly the same place across a wide set of questions. Figure 2 makes it crystal clear that the same cannot be said for partisanship. Whereas whites and minorities only differ significantly in their appraisal of whether racial university quotas are racist (by 20 points), Trump and Clinton voters differ widely on their attitudes to almost every aspect of racial behaviour. More than that, the gaps meet or exceed 20 points in 8 of 12 measures. In 7 of 12 the difference is significant at the $p < .01$ or $p < .001$ level, which is not true of any of the white-minority differences in figure 1. Figure 1 was sorted by the share who think a statement is racist, but figure 2 is sorted by the size of gap between Clinton and Trump supporters and gives an idea of the gulf between them.

Large differences appear with respect to two types of statement. First, those that concern policies identified with one party or the other, such as building a wall or affirmative action. For example, 72% of those who voted for Hilary Clinton in the sample view Trump's proposal to build a wall on the Mexican border to be racist, compared to 4% of Trump voters. On racial quotas, the tables are turned: 52% of Clinton voters and 96% of Trump voters – think this is racist. The second major axis of division concerns group partiality. As Haidt suggests, liberals have a hard time understanding the moral psychology of majority group loyalty.²⁴ Thus 79% of Clinton voters think it is racist to *want* one's child to marry someone of the same race, compared to 33% of Trump voters. Revealingly, 47% of Clinton voters think it is racist to even want one's racial group not to decline, as against just 12% of Trump voters. On reducing immigration to prevent one's group declining, 80 % of Clinton voters and 47% of Trump voters agree that this is racist. The degree of difference is slightly lower for wanting to increase immigration from certain countries to boost one's share, but the gap – 68 to 42 – is still highly significant. Finally, only 11 % of Trump voters think it's racist to want to live in an area where one's race is in the majority, compared to 40% of Clinton voters.

Figure 2.

Do you think the following are racist? (by 2016 vote)



Source: Amazon Mechanical Turk survey, Nov. 29. N=117-144. *Statistically significant at the p<.05 level; **p<.01; ***p<.001. N.S. - not significant.

The only statement where there is bipartisan agreement is on the idea of racial separatism, an idea only advocated by offshoots of the alt-right, as well as on the question of whether it's racist to ask for a driver's license to open a bank account, inserted only to catch those not paying attention when filling out the survey. In addition, there are a series of statements where partisan differences are significant, but more modest. These are mainly around traditional tests of racism such as not wanting a boss of a different race or to live next to someone of a different race.

The pilot survey bears out many of Haidt's postulates about the differing sensibilities of liberals and conservatives. Two stand out. First, the term 'racism,' which carries a powerful normative charge as a taboo in western societies, is interpreted similarly by those of different racial backgrounds but differently by those who vote for competing parties. In short, anti-racism is a highly contested social norm in America but not between those of different races. Second, partisanship cuts the cake cleanest for contemporary issues such as Trump's Wall or affirmative action. Third, liberals are much quicker to label expressions of racial self-interest – such as selective immigration – racist than are conservatives. Finally, there are areas where there is more bipartisan agreement for example, around traditional forms of racial prejudice such as not wanting a neighbour or boss of a different race.

As discussed earlier, my view is that the taboo against racism should be reserved for irrational reactions to other races or racial puritanism. As such, it is surprising to me that being disturbed by the way another race looks, sounds or smells did not elicit complete condemnation, even among Clinton voters. Indeed, Clinton voters were almost as exercised by the idea of someone wanting immigration reduction as their child to marry someone of their own race. Part of this can be explained by the motives respondents attribute to those acting in a racially partial way. Does someone not want their child to marry someone of another race because they feel the other person is inferior or will defile their race's purity? If so, that person is clearly racist. But if the motivation interest is to preserve the vitality of an historic ethnic group, this is a case of group-interested behaviour. It is clannish and illiberal, but calling it racist stretches the meaning of the term and dilutes its force for when we really need it.

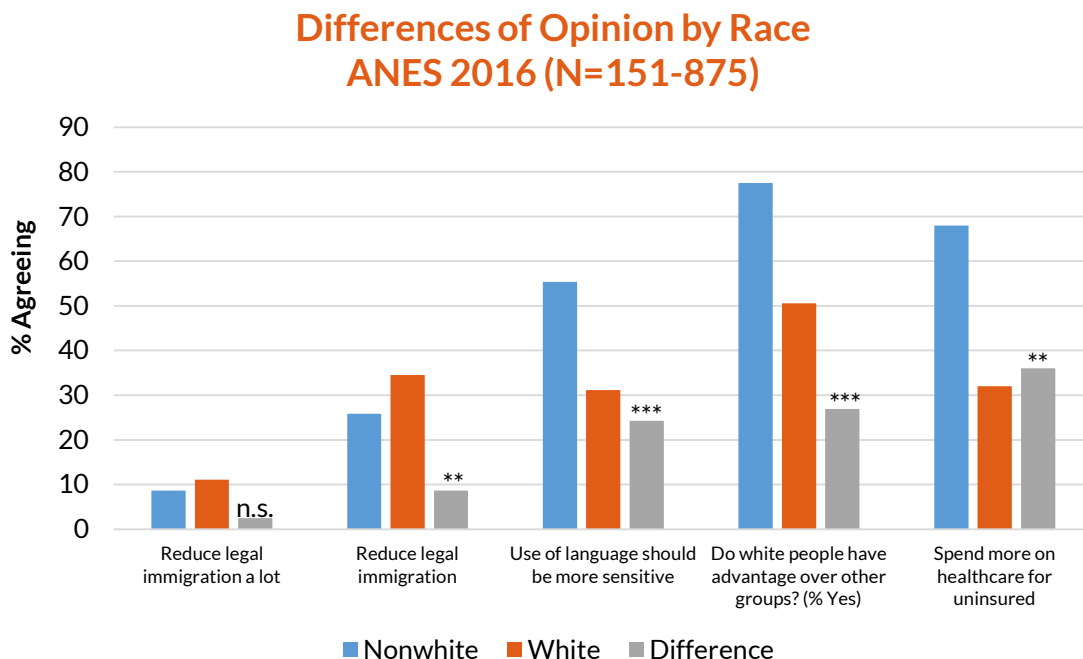
At the extreme, consider Zoroastrian Parsees, a tiny group with low fertility and proscriptions on intermarriage which is in danger of disappearing. 'While change is inevitable and the community needs to be a bit more pragmatic on the issue of intermarriage,' argues Dinyar Patel, 'I still strongly believe that marrying within the community is the best possible safeguard for ensuring that we don't get relegated to the history books in the next few generations.'²⁵ This sentiment may be illiberal, especially for larger groups which are not at risk of demise, but it is sloppy not to distinguish it from a dangerous worldview which fears and despises other groups.

Perceptions of Racism and Immigration

Figure 1 shows the one issue where whites and minorities significantly differed was over racial quotas for university. It seems that on historic white-black questions of access to resources, racial differences in perceptions of racism are more important. But this is less true for questions of ethnic demography and immigration. We see this in the 2016 American National Election Study (ANES) pilot survey, which asked a series of questions pertaining to perceptions of white privilege and immigration in January 2016. Data, presented in figures 3 and 4, show significant differences on racial issues between whites and non-whites, and between white Trump supporters and opponents. Again, the racial differences shown in figure 3 are not as large as the partisan ones in figure 4.

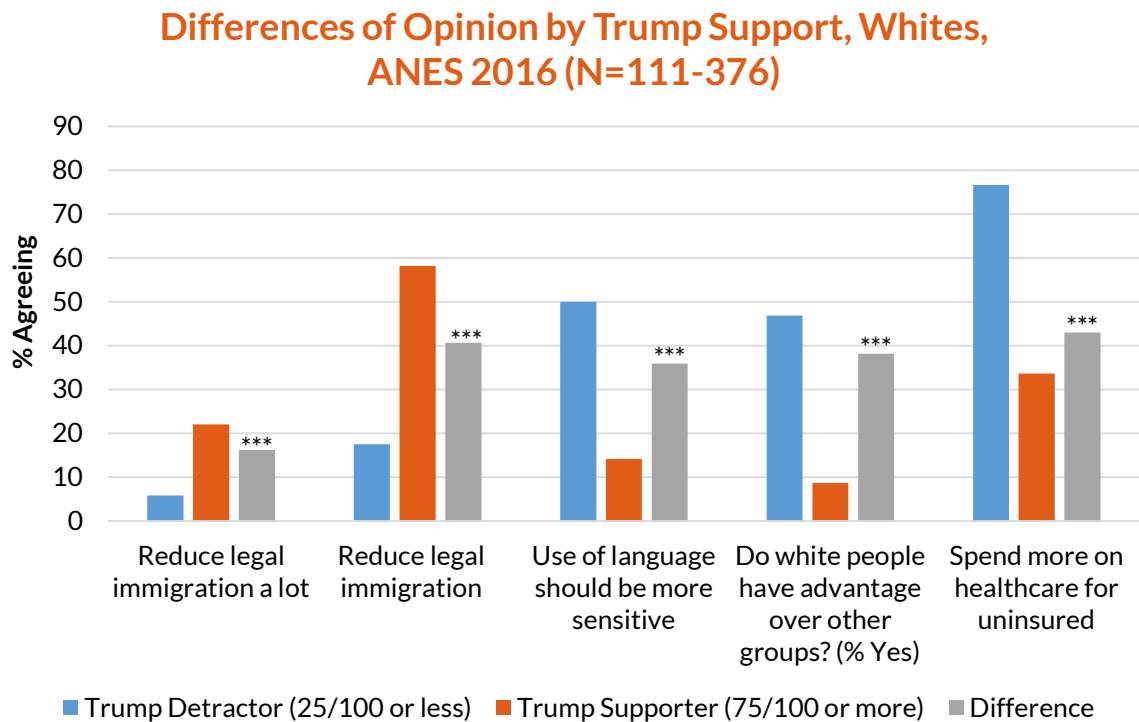
In addition, white-minority differences revolve more around questions of power and resources than immigration. For example, in figure 3, there is no significant difference between the share of minorities (9%) and whites (11%) who want legal immigration reduced a lot. The 34%-25% difference on reducing immigration is also relatively modest compared to the other sets of bars. On the other hand, partisan gaps on immigration dwarf racial ones. Figure 4 shows that 58% of white Trump supporters want less legal immigration compared to just 18% of white Trump detractors, a 40-point gap. Similar 40-point differences hold across the white privilege questions and healthcare, which, like many welfare issues in America, is heavily inflected by race.

Figure 3.



Source: 2016 American National Election Study (ANES) pilot survey. *Statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. N.S. - not significant.

Figure 4.



Source: 2016 American National Election Study (ANES) pilot survey. *Statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. N.S. - not significant.

Immigration and Anti-Racism: A Conjoint Analysis

Much of the previous discussion was based on a small American sample from MTurk, whose pool of respondents has a marked young, secular, white liberal skew. The aim was to ask a wide range of questions to gain perspective on where liberals and conservatives locate the boundaries of racism. The next focus was directly on the antiracism-immigration nexus, a central driver of right-wing populism in western societies. Given the importance of immigration for the Brexit and Trump vote, and perceived elite ‘political correctness’ on the issue, this work compares a much larger and more representative, sample of individuals: 2600 from the US and 1600 from Britain. The wording of questions is the same for both studies. Full details and cross tabulations for the US survey may be found here. Details for the UK survey are here. Text boxes and figures 5 though 25 are all based on the YouGov data.

United States

A ‘conjoint’ analysis technique is used, in which one aspect of a statement is altered and then compared with its original variant to see whether the alteration affected people’s answers in the treatment group.²⁶ Consider the question: ‘A white American who identifies with her group and its history supports a proposal

to reduce immigration. Her motivation is to maintain her group's share of America's population. Is this person: 1) just acting in her racial self-interest, which is not racist; 2) being racist; 3) don't know.' Excluding don't knows gives 61.4% of Americans who say this is not racist versus 38.6% who say it is. This is a more conservative response than the MTurk sample in figure 2, reflecting YouGov's attempt to achieve a representative sample by matching the population on partisanship and other variables.

The conjoint technique involves two changes to the questions. First, the words Asian, Black or Latino are swapped for White to see how responses change. Second, 'decrease' is changed to 'increase' immigration, and 'maintain' to 'increase' group share. Thus: 'An Asian American who identifies with her group and its history supports a proposal to increase immigration from Asia. Her motivation is to increase her group's share of America's population.' Doing this across the four main US racial groups shows how a person's view of what is racist changes as the group in question shifts and the favoured immigration policy changes from a reduction to a selective increase. It also shows how the results differ between whites and minorities as distinct from liberals and conservatives.

The bottom line, summarised in boxes A and B, is that white liberals overwhelmingly consider white attempts to reduce immigration as racist. Their view changes considerably when minorities adopt the same strategy or if whites seek European immigration to boost their numbers. Conservatives and minorities are also biased, but the degree of inconsistency is lower.

Box A. Racism and Immigration: White Liberal Inconsistency?

- 73% of white Clinton voters say a white American who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 57% of white Clinton voters say a Japanese or Black American who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 34% of white Clinton voters say a white American who wants to increase immigration from Europe to boost her group's share of the population is being racist
- 18% of white Clinton voters say a Latino or Asian American who wants to increase immigration from Latin America or Asia to boost her group's share of the population is being racist

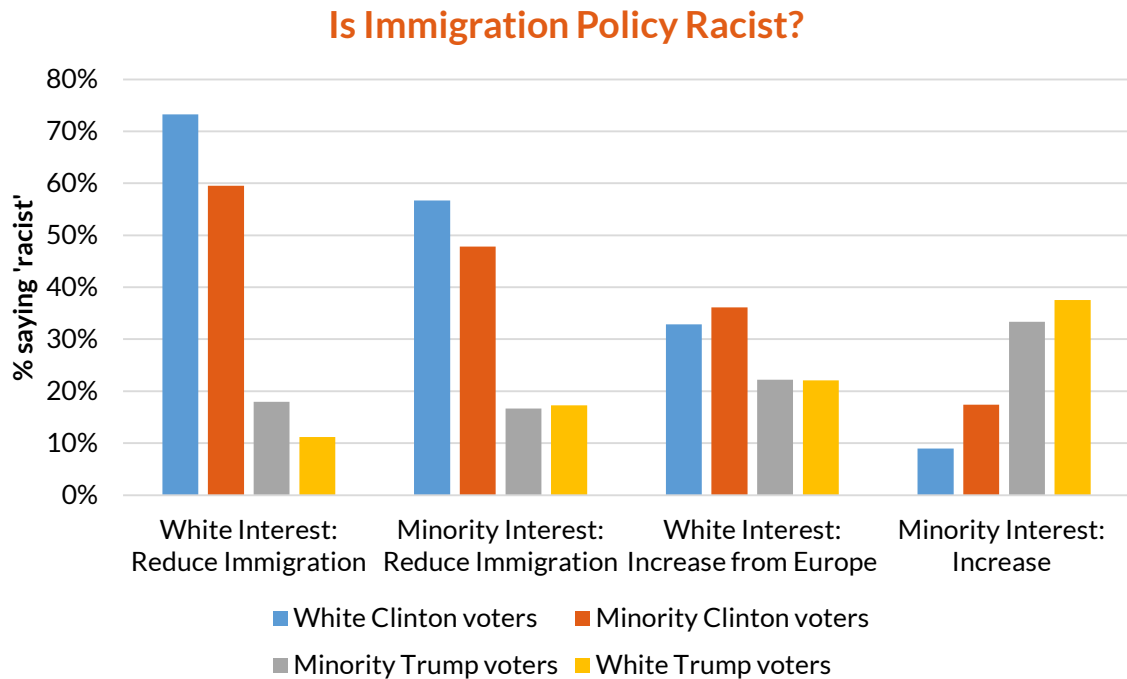
Box B. Racism and Immigration: White Conservative Inconsistency

- 11% of white Trump voters say a white American who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 18% of white Trump voters say a Japanese or Black American who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 29% of white Trump voters say a white American who wants to increase immigration from Europe to boost her group's share of the population is being racist
- 39% of white Trump voters say a Latino or Asian American who wants to increase immigration from Latin America or Asia to boost her group's share of the population is being racist

A detailed summary appears in figure 5. The set of bars at top left shows that 73% (of 142) white Clinton voters who answered this question think a white American who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist. This drops to just 59.5% (of 84) minority Clinton voters, 21% (of 39) minority Trump voters and 11% (of 197) white Trump voters. In other words, there is almost a 60-point difference between white Trump and Clinton voters on this question, with most Clinton voters calling this racist and most Trump voters seeing this as racially self-interested behaviour which is not racist. Polarization between Trump and Clinton voters drops from 60 to 39 points when we turn from white to minority voters. This is noticeably less, though still important.

Altering the question to reducing immigration to permit African or Japanese-Americans to maintain their share of the population erodes the proportion of white Clinton voters calling this racist from 73% to 57%. Minority Clinton voters show a similar drop, from 60% to 48%, while for white Trump voters a slightly larger share now say this is racist – 17% rather than 11%. Change the question to increasing immigration from Europe to boost white numbers and acceptance among white liberals is much greater: only 33% of white Clinton voters think this is racist, not vastly different from the 36% of minority Clinton voters, 22% of minority Trump voters and 22% of white Trump voters. A switch to minorities calling for more immigrants from their part of the world (Asia, Latin America) leads to a rise in the share of Trump voters calling this racist from 22% (for immigrants from Europe) to 38% (for immigrants from Asia/Latin America) and a concomitant drop among white Clinton supporters from 33% (for Europe) to 9% (for Asia and Latin America).

Figure 5.

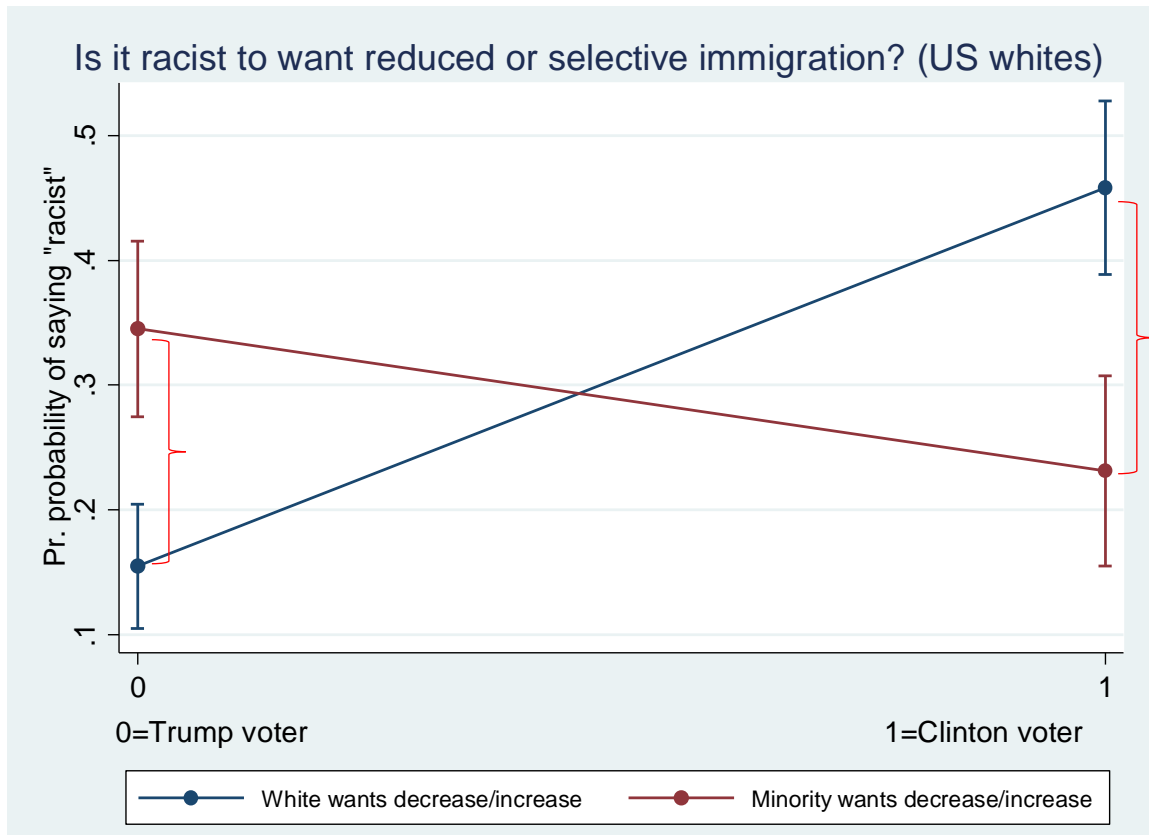


Source: YouGov surveys. N= 132-187 (Clinton whites), 69-115 (Clinton minorities), 182-275 (Trump whites), 27-42 (Trump minorities)

The conjoint analysis shows that minorities are more consistent than whites and that partisanship matters far more than race when it comes to influencing where one draws the line between racist and group interest. The steep downward slope across the bars in the first set shows that white Clinton supporters are inconsistent and the final set shows white Trump supporters are too.

Who is more lopsided? The steeper slope of the blue bars across sets compared to purple bars suggests white liberals are more inconsistent than white conservatives, but it may be that the relationship is driven by the fact Clinton and Trump supporters differ on other characteristics such as age or education which is what really accounts for the pattern. Just to be sure, I control for age, education, marital status, income, employment, gender and state.²⁷ This produces the result in figure 6. This shows that white Clinton voters are slightly more inconsistent in their judgments than Trump voters when judging white against minority statements. As the bracket on the right side of the figure shows, Clinton voters are more likely to consider white partiality over immigration policy as racist than minority partiality. They find white preferences racist 46% of the time compared to 23% for minorities, a 23-point discrepancy. Trump voters see the reverse: calling minority preferences racist 34% of the time compared to 15% for whites, a 19-point discrepancy. Both are biased, but Clinton voters are somewhat more skewed, and in general are more likely to describe group-oriented immigration preferences as racist.

Figure 6.

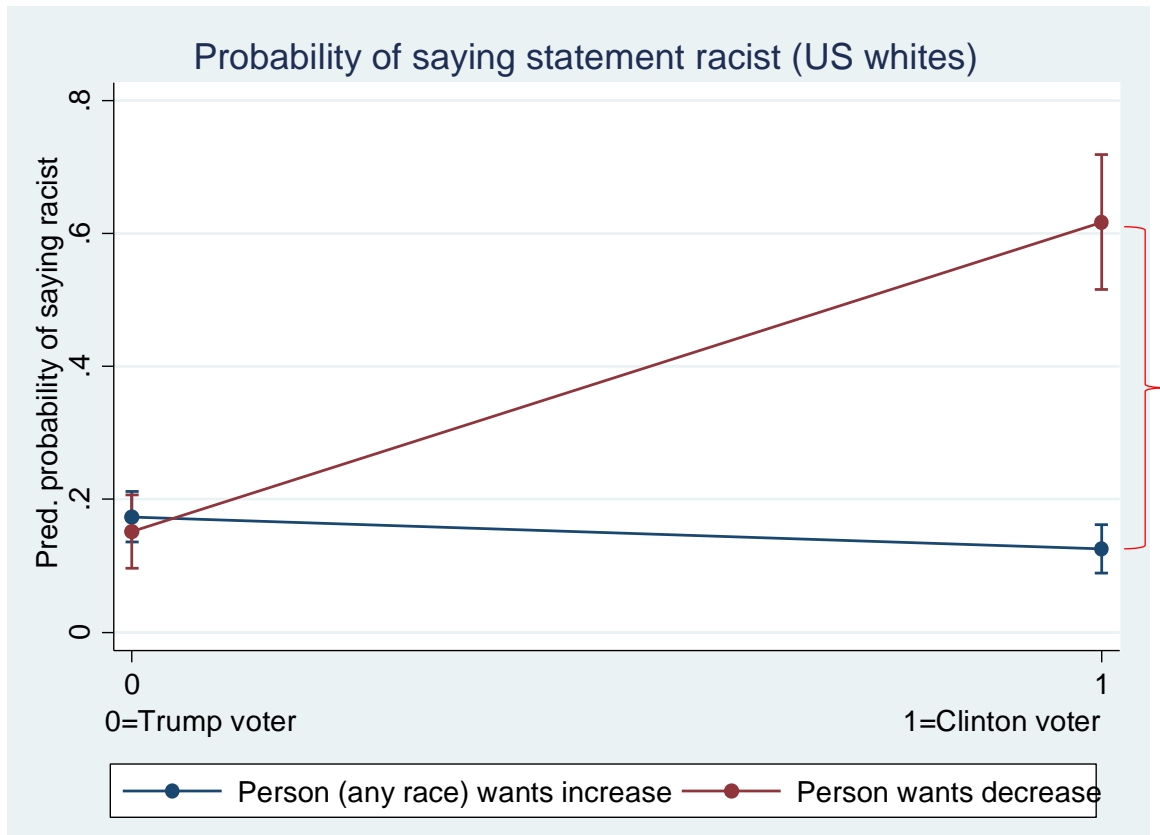


Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=670.

The partisan bias gap grows much wider when we consider the form of policy that individuals advocate on behalf of their group. Regardless of whether a white, Japanese or African-American is requesting lower immigration levels to maintain their group, white Clinton voters are far more likely to find this racist than when these various groups seek increased immigration from their world region to boost their numbers.

Figure 7 shows that when respondents call for an increase, there is no significant difference between white Trump and Clinton voters in their judgment of whether a person is being racist. Change the question to *decreasing* immigration however, and a completely different picture emerges. Now, white Clinton voters are far more likely to see this as racist. As figure 7 shows, the distance between the lines - or probability of saying a statement is racist - for Clinton voters is .62 for a person calling for a decrease compared to .15 for a person calling for a selective increase, a 47-point difference.

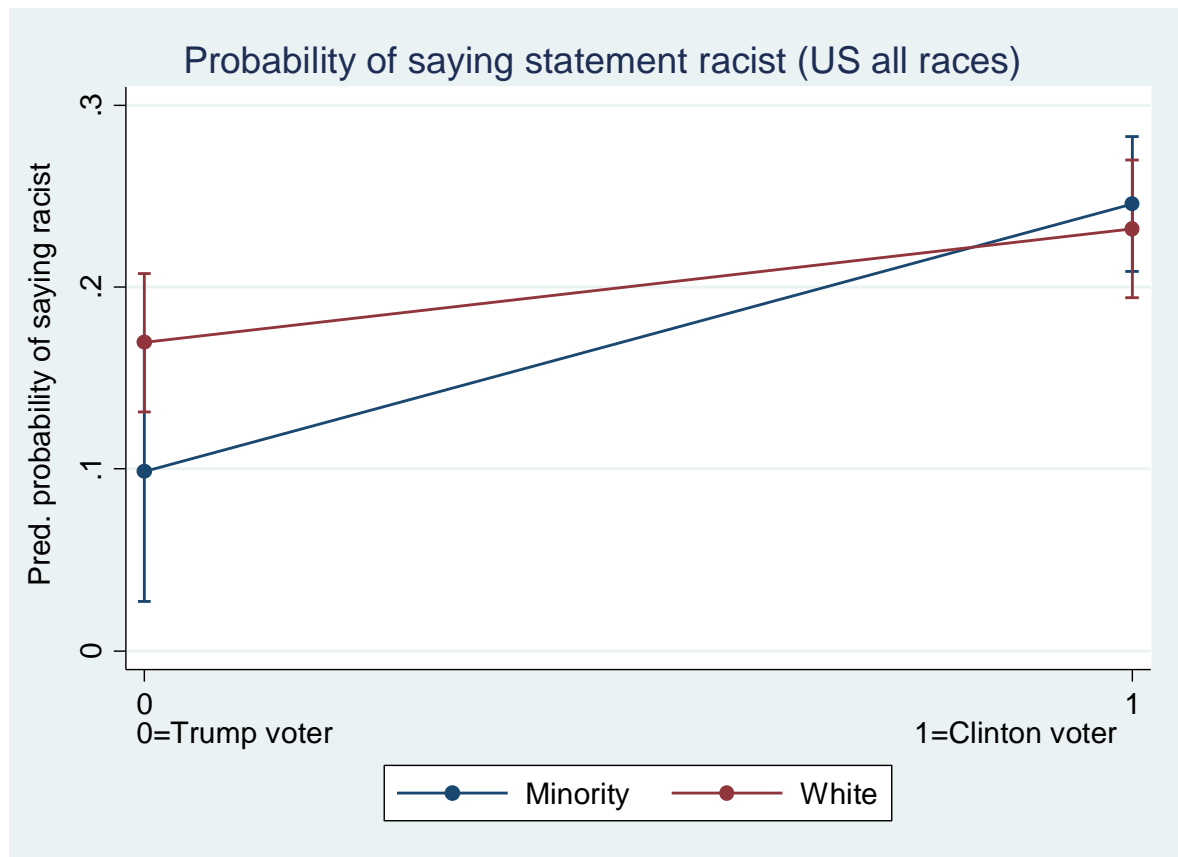
Figure 7.



Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=1049.

Finally, we return to the earlier finding that the race of the person filling out the survey question has little bearing on the result with the partial exception of minority Trump voters, who are less likely than white Trump voters to describe a statement as racist (figure 8).

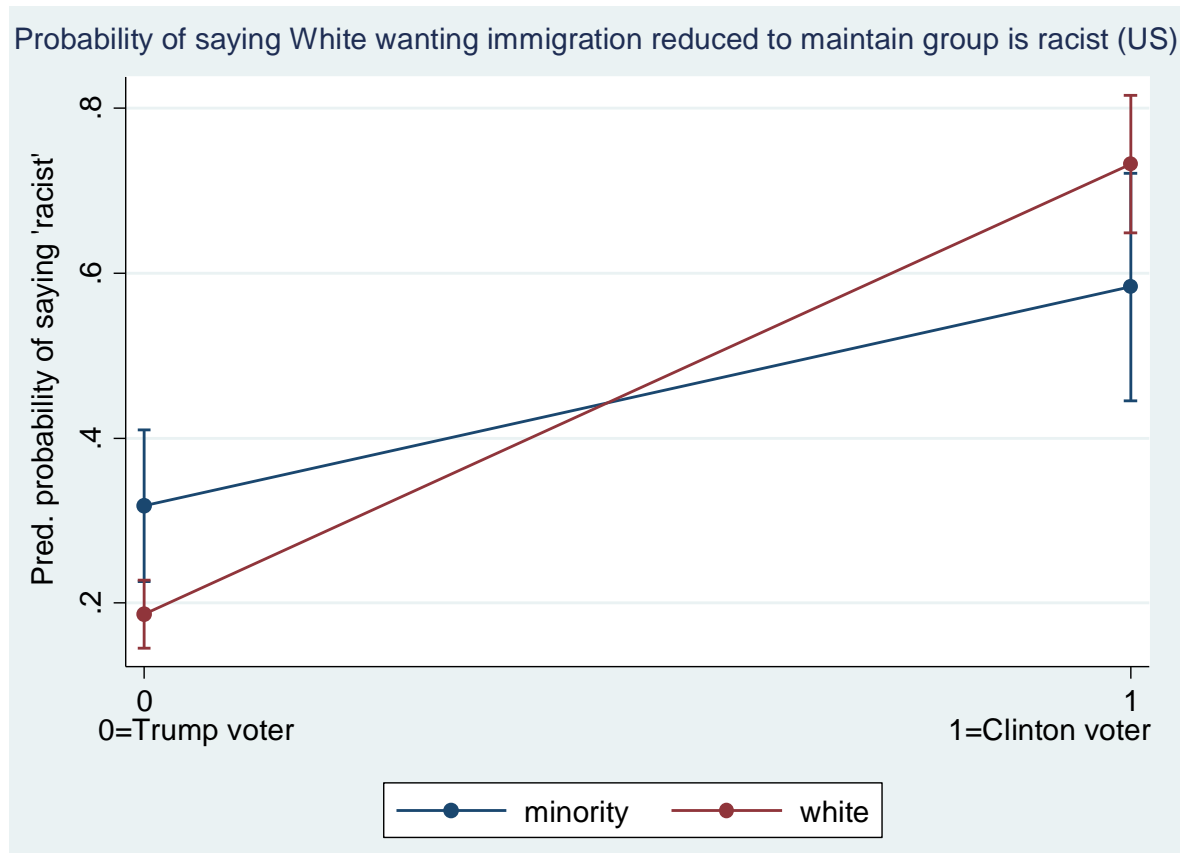
Figure 8.



Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=1357.

This is true across the full range of statements, but as we saw, partisanship tends to cut different ways depending on whether the question refers to whites or minorities and decreases or increases. When we focus on minorities wanting an increase to boost numbers, or whites wanting a decrease to maintain themselves (as in figure 9), it is evident that white respondents are significantly less consistent and more affected by partisanship than minorities. Minority Trump voters are 15 points more likely than white Trump voters, and minority Clinton voters about the same increment less likely than white Clinton voters, to call a white person racist for wanting to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population. The red line (for white voters) is steeper than the blue line (for minorities), which indicates that whites are less consistent in their judgments than minorities and more affected by partisan motivated reasoning.

Figure 9.



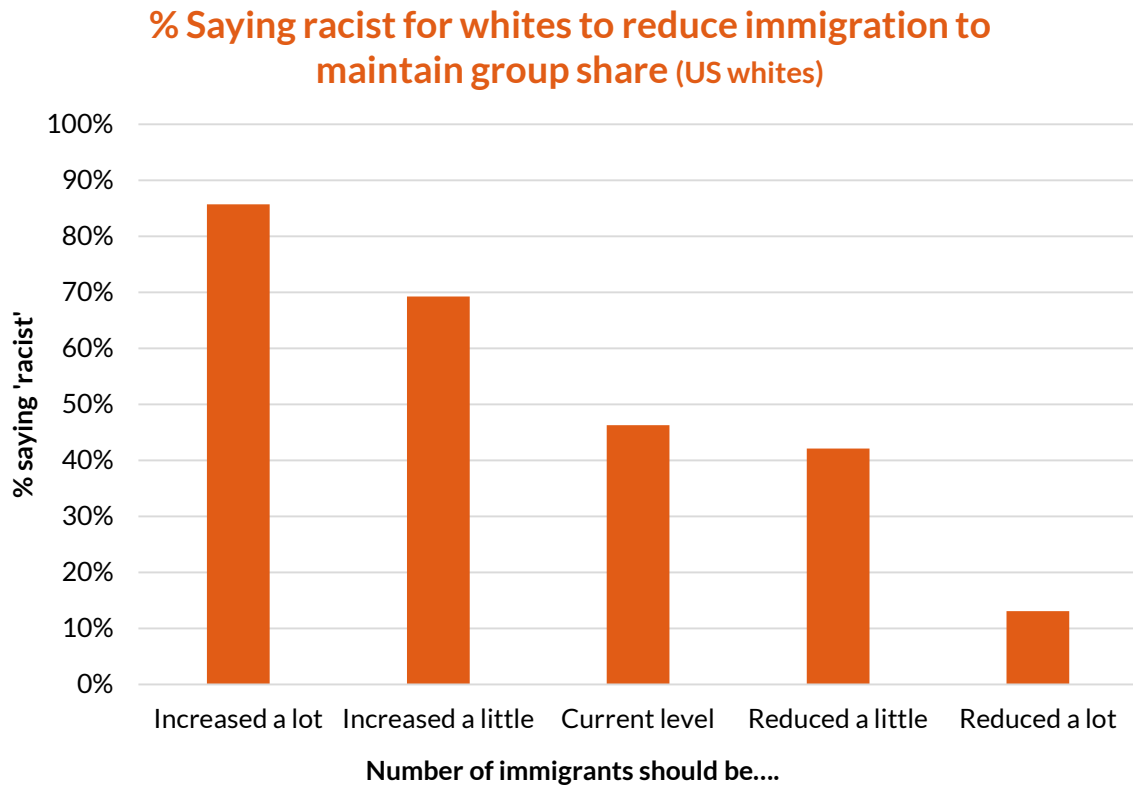
Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=614.

Pro- and Anti-Immigration Americans' Views

An underlying aim of this report is to ask whether opposition to immigration is motivated by anti-racist sentiment. Figure 10 shows quite clearly that there is a strong relationship: 86% of white Americans who want immigration increased a lot say it is racist for whites to want immigration reduced to maintain their group's share of the population but just 13% of whites who call for immigration to be reduced a lot agree. This suggests very few pro-immigration whites are not motivated, at least in part, by ethical concerns. It also intimates that many anti-immigration whites may be motivated by a desire to limit the decline of their racial group in America. It may be that anti-immigration whites oppose immigration for economic or security reasons, but the fact they do not pass judgment on those who oppose immigration out of racial self-interest indicates they may share these sentiments.

In effect, one's take on the antiracism norm may well be the key underlying determinant of immigration sentiment in the contemporary United States.

Figure 10.



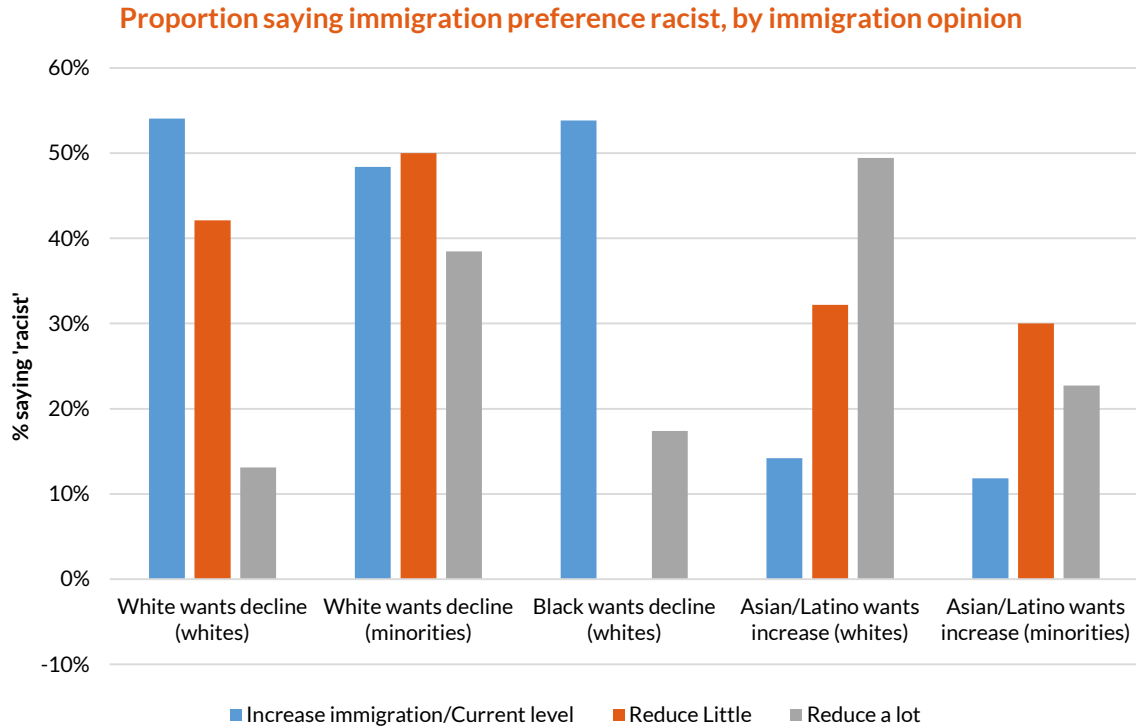
Source: YouGov surveys. N=154.

To gain perspective across a set of different conditions, we can compare views on white behaviour with those on minority behaviour, and examine peoples' attitudes to statements seeking to reduce immigration as well as selectively increase it. In order to guard against small samples, I amalgamate the 'increase a lot', 'increase a little' and 'stay the same' responses. Results are presented in figure 11. These show that whites' immigration policy views are a major driver of whether they view group-interested policies as racist. In the leftmost set of bars, 54% of whites who want immigration increased or are happy for it to remain the same say it is racist for whites to try to maintain their group position through reducing immigration. This compares to just 13% for those saying 'reduce a lot,' as we also saw in figure 9.

Views don't differ much when African-Americans try to maintain their share by restricting immigration: 54% of pro-immigration whites see this as racist compared to 17% of anti-immigration whites. The opposite is true when whites are asked about Asian and Latino desires to increase immigration to grow their group (fourth set of bars). Now nearly half of anti-immigration whites find this racist while only 14% of pro-immigration whites do. Minority survey respondents are again more consistent than whites, as shown by the flatter gradient between blue and green bars in the second and last sets. In other words, pro- and anti-

immigration minorities show less variation on the white wanting a decrease and minorities desiring an increase.

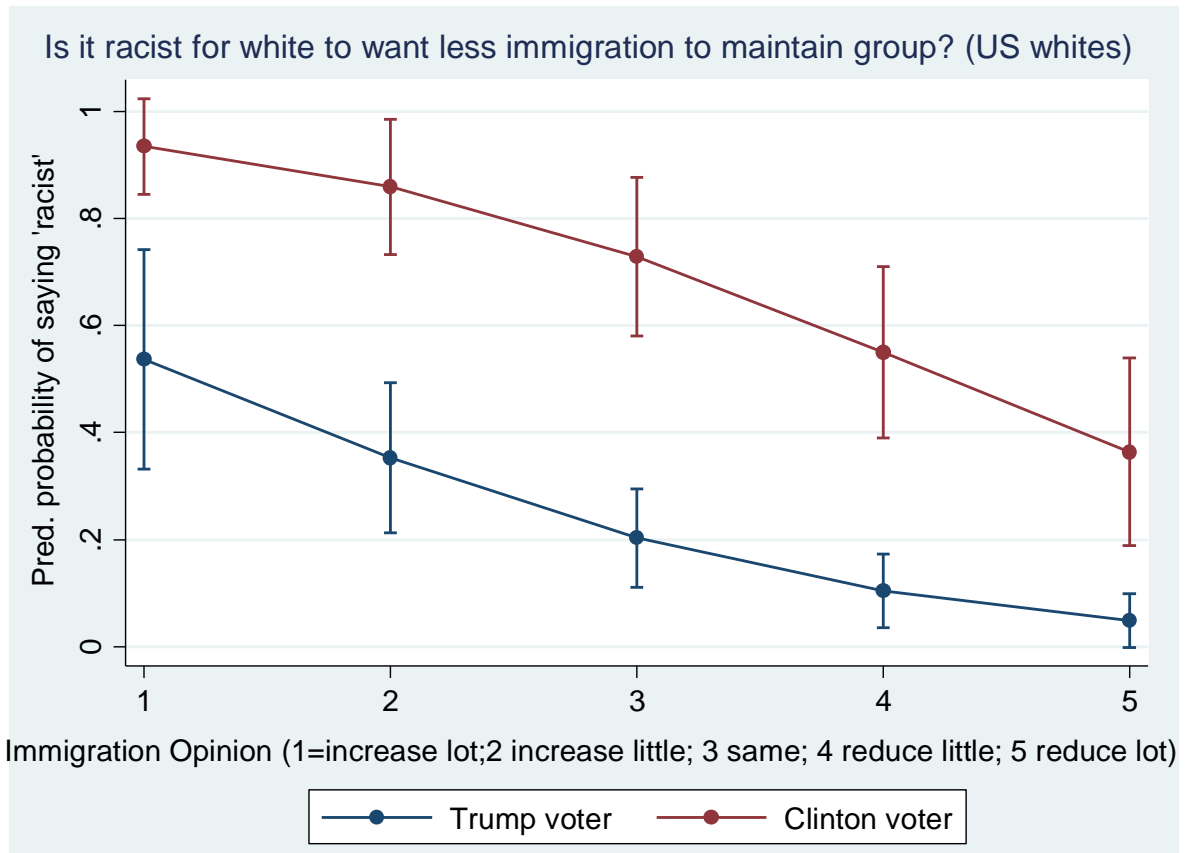
Figure 11.



Source: YouGov surveys. N (by set, left to right) = 154, 50, 133, 305, 108.

Looking in more statistical detail, it becomes clear that both immigration opinion and partisanship shape whether a person views group-interested immigration preferences as racist. This is evident in figure 13. The red line for white Clinton voters is consistently 40-50 points higher (more likely to say person is racist) than the blue Trump line. Yet it is also true that the difference in the probability of calling the statement racist between whites wanting immigration increased a lot – at point 1 on the left of the graph – and those wanting it reduced a lot – at point 5 on the right – is 50-60 points. Though sample size isn’t large, this seems most evident among white Clinton voters: 86-94% of white pro-immigration Clinton voters see whites who want to reduce immigration to maintain their group as racist, compared to 36-54% of Clinton voters who want immigration reduced.

Figure 13.



Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=118.

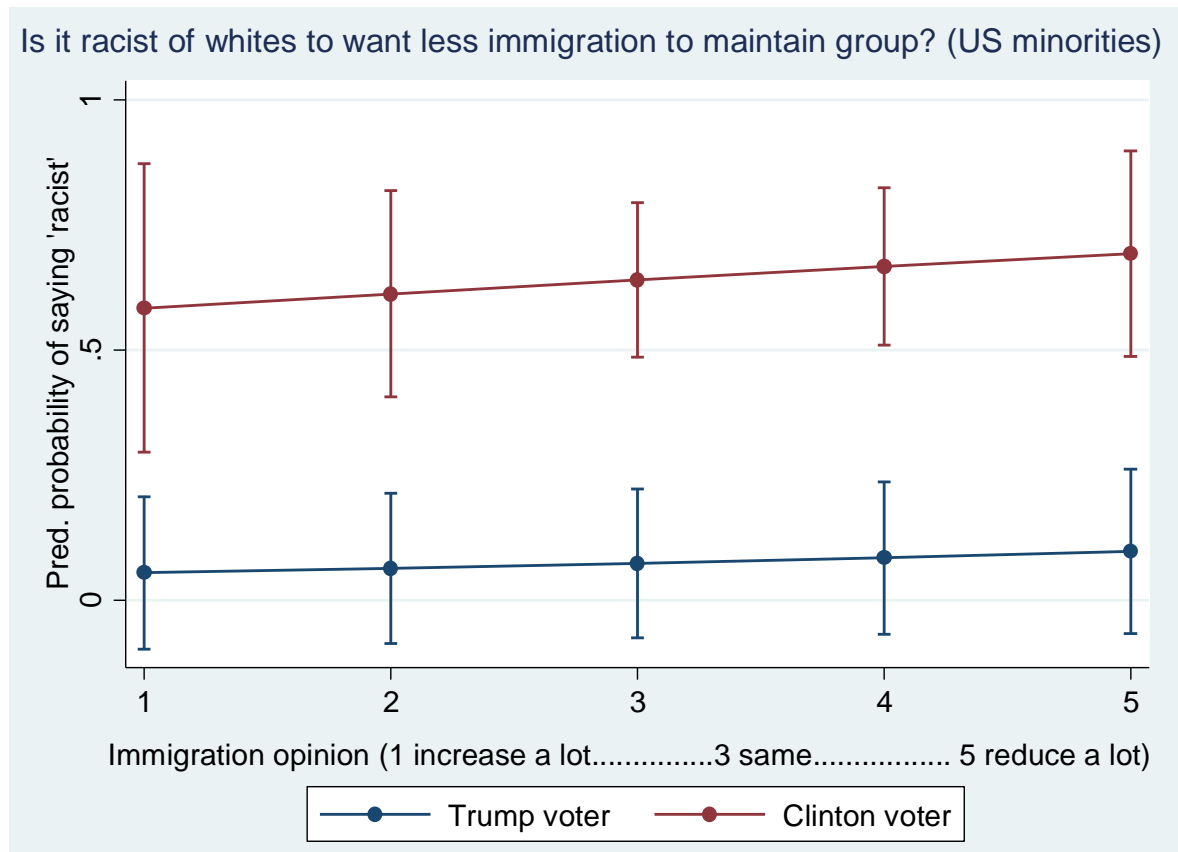
Having said this, it is noteworthy that 6 of the 14 white anti-immigration Clinton voters (42%) say it is racist to want immigration reduced for group-interested reasons. This is also true for 10 of 14 (71%) non-white anti-immigration Clinton voters. This points to a small but important group of voters who see race-oriented opposition to immigration as racist but who nevertheless want reductions, likely for reasons of labour competition, pressure on public services or security concerns.

At the other end of the spectrum, there is also a small group of whites who want immigration reduced a lot but feel it's racist to want to do so to maintain their group share. The fact only 13% of the 61 whites who want a large reduction feel this way (and 20% of 80 whites who want to reduce a little or a lot do) is suggestive. It indicates that purely non-ethnic motivations probably only obtain for a fifth of anti-immigration whites. And half the white population, according to this sample, is anti-immigration.

What's interesting when examining minority voters, which we do in figure 12, is that their immigration opinion is not significantly associated with their judgments about whether whites' group-interested immigration preferences are racist: we can see this from the flatness of the lines as we move from left to right. However,

partisan differences are large: about 50-60 points separate the Clinton and Trump lines. Minority Clinton voters who are strongly anti-immigration have a 53% chance of calling the statement racist, only modestly lower than the 69% for strongly pro-immigration minority Clinton voters. This compared to just 5-10% of the small band of minority Trump voters who view this sentiment as racist.

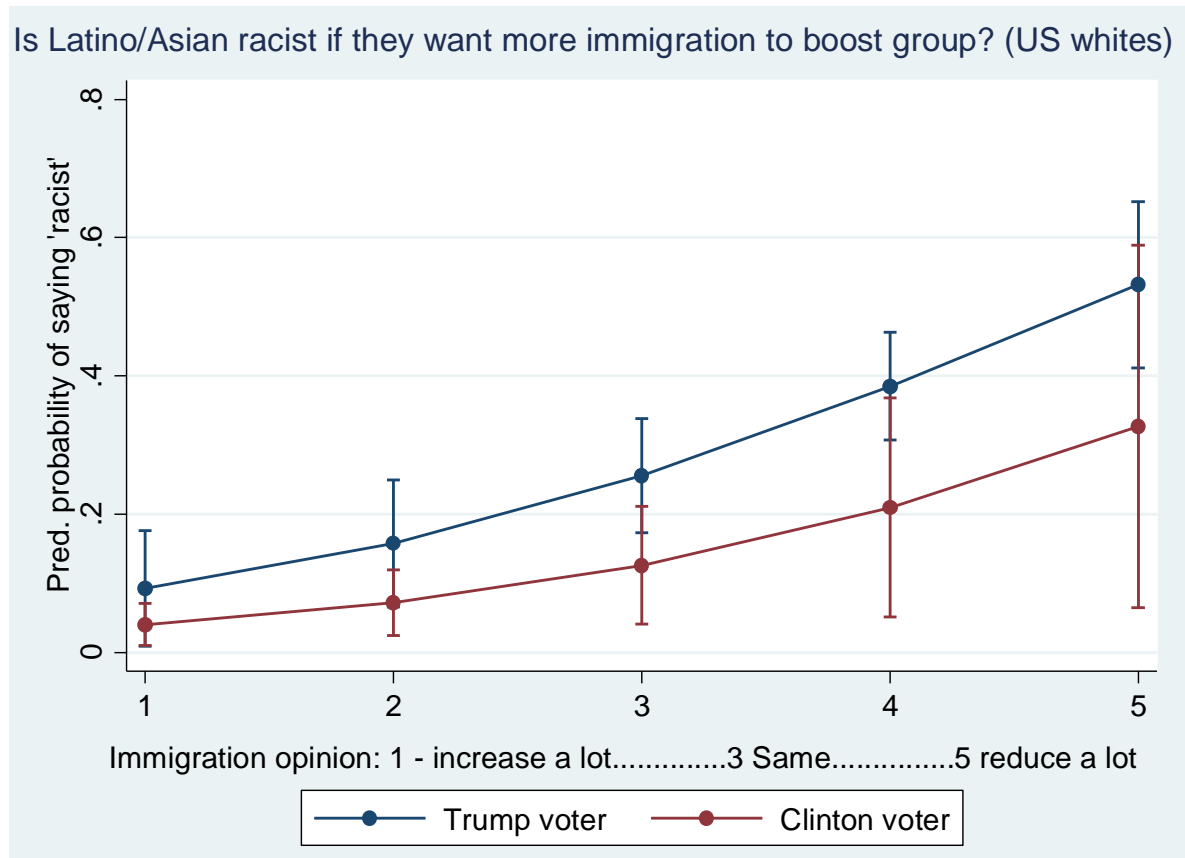
Figure 12.



Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=40.

We see something a little different in figure 13, which asks whether a Latino or Asian woman is racist if she wants more immigration from Latin America/Asia to boost her group's numbers. Partisanship matters, but now Trump voters say the person is racist more than Clinton supporters. For instance, 53% of white Trump voters who want immigration reduced a lot say an Asian or Latino person is being racist for wanting to boost their share via immigration compared to 38% of white Clinton voters. Yet what really counts here is immigration opinion: 53% of white Trump voters who want immigration reduced a lot say the person is being racist, but only 4% of white Trump voters who want more immigration agree.

Figure 13.



Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=243.

USA: Summary

This review of American data shows that 'motivated reasoning' is at work when it comes to the immigration-racism nexus. People's affective attachments to policies and parties drive their answers, not 'slow-thinking' evaluative reasoning. behavioural economists say people 'aren't rational, they rationalize'.²⁸

Despite the fact these questions focus on whites and minorities, we see little evidence of white or minority Americans biased toward themselves. The little racial bias that exists soon fades when partisanship or immigration opinion is controlled. What we do see, is minorities are more consistent in their evaluations across white, minority, increase and decline statements than whites: less subject to being swayed by partisanship. When it comes to categorizing someone's immigration views as racist, a person's race matters far less than whether they are a Clinton or Trump voter. The same polarisation exists between pro- and anti-immigration voters: pro-immigration voters tend to side with those seeking an increase, even a group-slanted one. Anti-immigration voters back those who want a decrease, paying little heed to race.

White Guilt vs. White Nationalism?

The extent of partisan and immigration-related issue bias is larger among white than minority Americans. In other words, the divide between Trump and Clinton, or between pro- and anti-immigration, is wider among whites than minorities. This suggests whites are more likely than minorities to be swayed by their attachment to parties and issues. The ANES 2016 pilot survey finds that 88% of white Trump supporters but only 53% of his detractors feel no guilt about the 'privileges and benefits you receive as a white American.' Might it therefore be correct to label the two white American camps 'white guilt' and 'white nationalist'?

Some evidence speaks against this: many white liberals say African-Americans who want reduced immigration are being racist while a quarter of white Trump voters say whites who want more immigration from Europe are being racist. Neither squares with the 'white guilt v. white nationalism' partisan divide. Yet these positions do not necessarily contradict the 'white guilt'/'white nationalism' antinomy. African-American restrictionism slows the diversification of America, deferring the decline of white America needed to expiate whites' 'original sin'.²⁹ From the other direction, nationalist whites may feel that European immigration will arrive from southern and eastern rather than northwest Europe - from which most white Americans descend - altering the ethnic character of their imagined community. In a later section, we'll look at respondents' free-text comments, which help us understand why people answered the way they did.

Britain

British patterns echo American ones, but with two key differences. First, white British are significantly less likely than white Americans to think that a white person who wants to reduce immigration to maintain the position of the ethnic majority is racist. Just 24% of white British say this, compared to 32% of white Americans. Second, whereas there is no race gap in perceptions of racism in America when partisanship is taken into account, there is an important racial divide in Britain. In Britain, 54% of minorities (including Europeans) but only 24% of white British say it is racist for a white majority person to want to reduce immigration to maintain their group share. In the US, 45% of minorities and 36% of whites feel this way. The race gap in perceptions of racism disappears in the US when we account for partisanship, but this is not true in Britain, where a 25-point race divide persists even within the Remain side. In effect, as Box C reveals, race matters alongside partisanship in Britain when it comes to perceiving immigration preferences as racist.

Box C. Racism and Immigration: USA vs. UK

- 47% of white British Remainers say a white Briton who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 73% of white Clinton voters say a white American who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 73% of minority Remainers say a white Briton who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 60% of minority Clinton voters say a white American who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 5% of white British Leave voters say a white Briton who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 11% of white Trump voters say a white American who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist

Turning to commonalities, we see that Leavers, like Trump supporters, are much less likely than Remainers to view whites who want reduced immigration to protect their group position as racist. Also in keeping with their American analogues, Brexiteers are much more likely than Remainers to consider non-whites who want increased immigration to boost their group to be racist. The headline numbers are displayed in boxes D and E. 47% of Remainers, but just 5% of Leavers, say it is racist for a white Briton to want less immigration to protect their group's position. By contrast, just 18% of Remainers, but 41% of Leavers, claim it is racist for minority Britons to want to boost their group numbers through more immigration.

Box D. Racism and Immigration: White Liberal Inconsistency

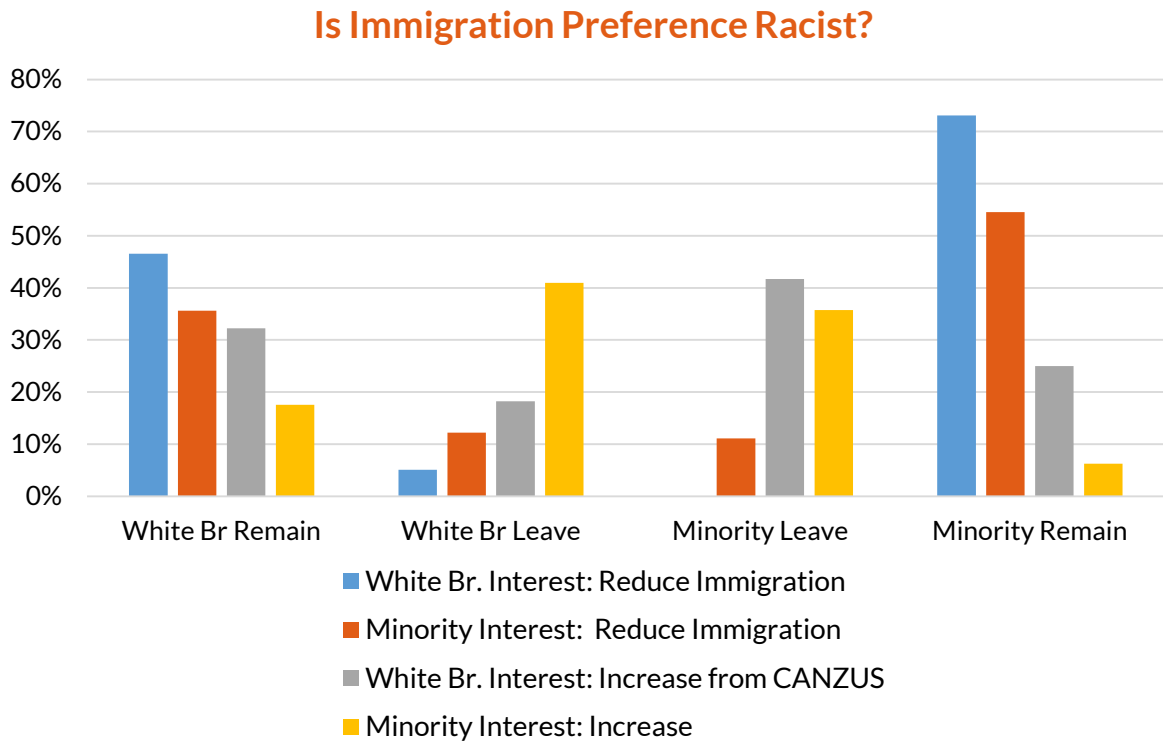
- 47% of white British Remain voters say a white Briton who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 36% of white British Remain voters say an Asian or Afro-Caribbean Briton who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 32% of white British Remain voters say a white Briton who wants to increase immigration from the Anglosphere to boost her group's share of the population is being racist
- 18% of white British Remain voters say an Asian or Afro-Caribbean Briton who wants to increase immigration from Asia or the Caribbean to boost her group's share of the population is being racist

Box E. Racism and Immigration: White Conservative Inconsistency

- 5% of white British Leave voters say a white Briton who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 12% of white British Leave voters say an Asian or Afro-Caribbean Briton who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population is being racist
- 18% of white British Leave voters say a white Briton who wants to increase immigration from the Anglosphere to boost her group's share of the population is being racist
- 41% of white British Leave voters say an Asian or Afro-Caribbean Briton who wants to increase immigration from Asia or the Caribbean to boost her group's share of the population is being racist

Looking across the range of question variations in figure 14, we see slopes in all four sets of bars apart from minority Leavers. The figure shows a steeper slope among minority Remainders than white Remainders, indicating that partisanship affects perceptions of racism more among minorities than white Britons. For instance, the blue line in the right-most set of bars shows that 73% of minority Remainders say it is racist for white British to want less immigration to maintain their group's share, but just 6% of minority Remainders say the same about minorities wanting more immigration to boost their numbers (purple bar at right). For white British, the respective figures are 47% (leftmost blue bar) and 18% (leftmost purple bar), a less extreme discrepancy. These results are the opposite of the American situation, where minorities were more consistent than whites.

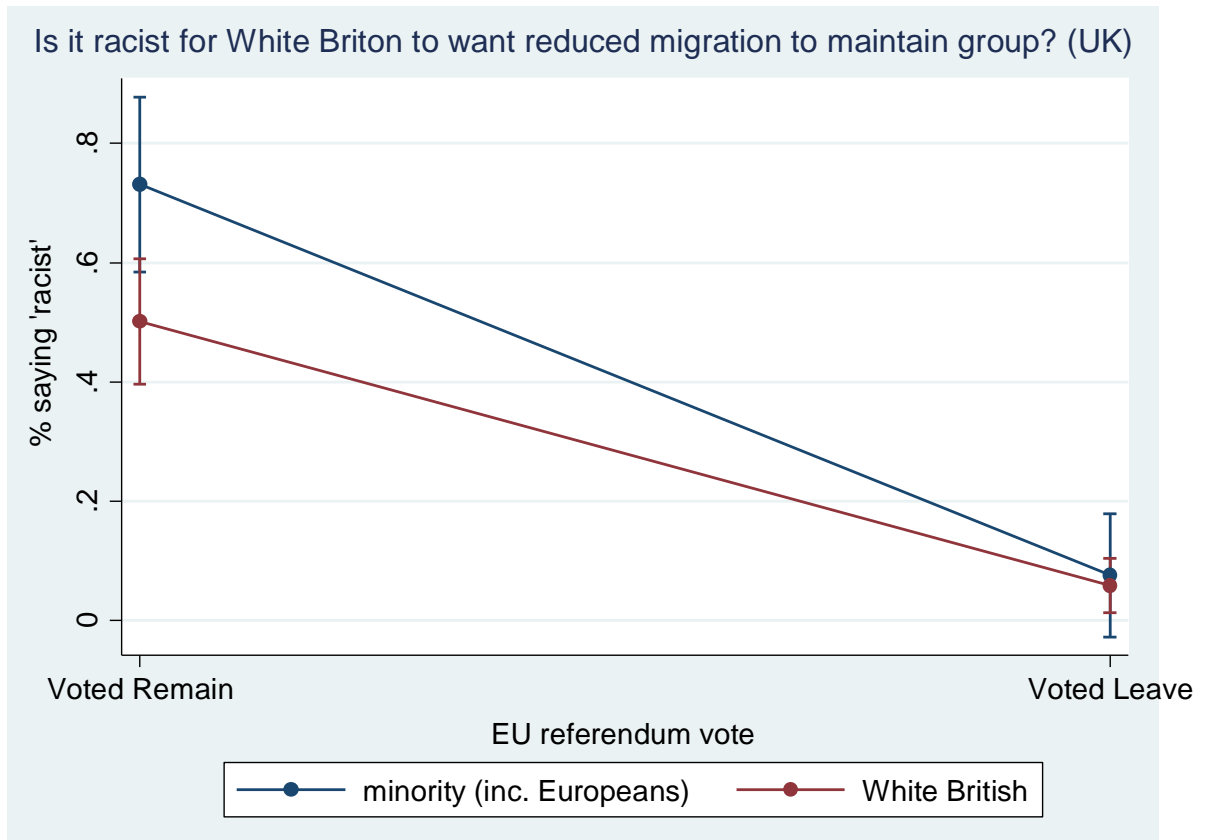
Figure 14.



Source: YouGov surveys. N = 171-183 (White British Remain), 172-210 (White British Leave), 8-14 (Minority Leave), 12-26 (Minority Remain)

Could it be that minorities are younger than whites, or that income, education, region or something else associated with being a minority is really driving the results? To some extent this is the case, but even with these controls in place, there is a clear relationship which is very noticeable on the Remain side. As figure 15 reveals, white British and minority Leavers largely agree that it is not racist for a white Briton to seek reduced immigration to maintain the white British share of the total. Among Remainers, however, we see a 20-point gap between white British and minority Remainers, with the former less likely to see this as racist.

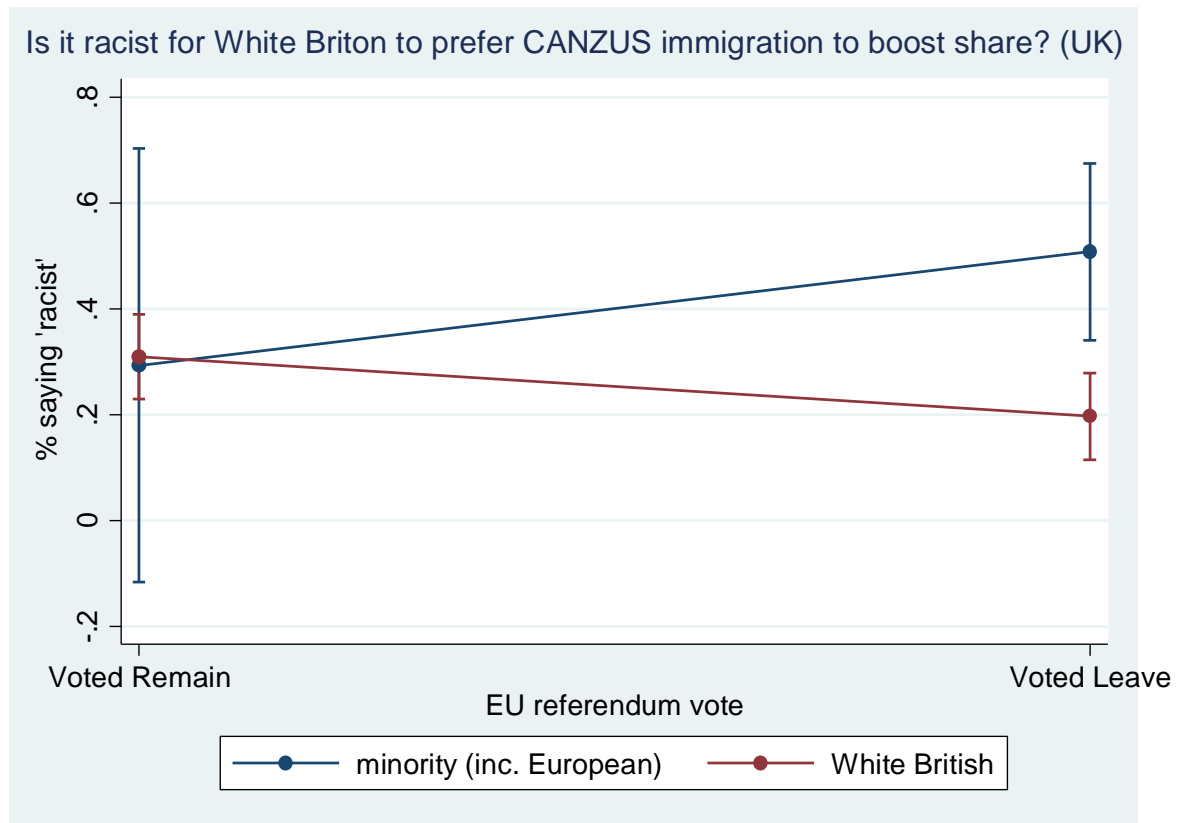
Figure 15.



Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=296.

It's a different story when it comes to white Britons desiring more immigrants from the white Anglosphere (Canada, US, Australia, New Zealand) to boost their numbers. This time, as figure 16 shows, minority Leavers are 30 points more likely than white British Leavers to call this racist but there are no significant racial gaps in the Remain camp. Note how figures 13 and 14 represent the reverse of the American figures 6 and 7.

Figure 16.



Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=285.

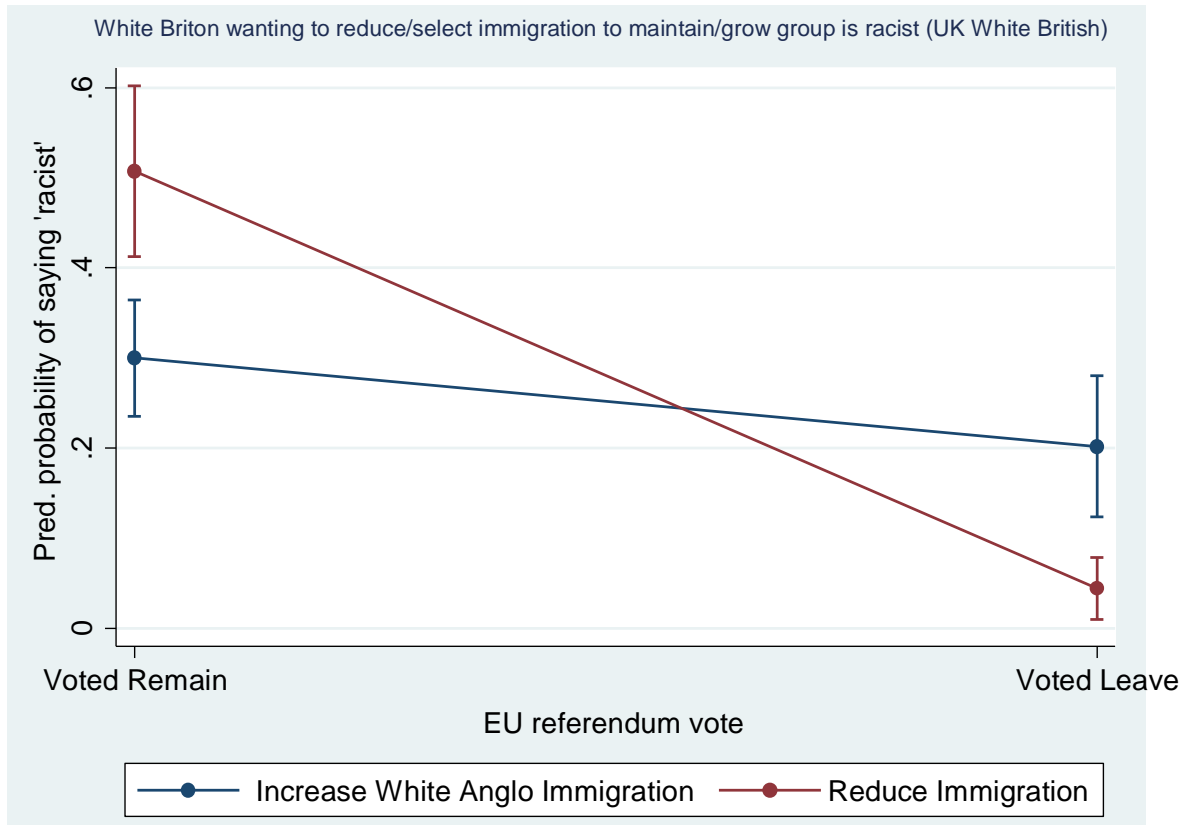
When it comes to thinking an Afro-Caribbean or Asian person is racist if they want to reduce immigration to maintain their population share, we see a similar, if somewhat smaller, gap of around 20 points, with minority Leavers more likely to call this racist than white British Leavers. As for considering Afro-Caribbeans or Asians racist for wanting more of their own group to immigrate to boost group share, racial differences of opinion fade when we control for Brexit vote and demographics.

Here it seems the big driver for minorities is policy congruence: minority Brexiteers align with white British Brexiteers when it comes to advocating restriction – which they support – but not when it comes to selectively admitting increased numbers of white immigrants, since they oppose increased immigration. Minority Remainers align with white British Remainers on group-focused immigration from the white Commonwealth – since they support increased immigration – but demur when it comes to immigration reduction, which they oppose.

The notable majority-minority differences we see in Britain from figures 13 and 14 form a contrast to the American situation. Yet this doesn't mean partisan differences are unimportant. Britain may not be as extreme in this regard as the US, but the left side of figure 17 shows that white Britons who voted Remain are

much more likely (by about 50% to 30%) to think that white majority folk who want immigration reduced for groupist reasons are being racist than whites who want more white Anglo immigration to boost their numbers. White British Leave voters take the opposite view: the right hand side of the figure shows they are much more likely (by 20% to 5%) to tag white Britons calling for more white Anglo immigration as racist than whites who want to reduce immigration to achieve the same goal.

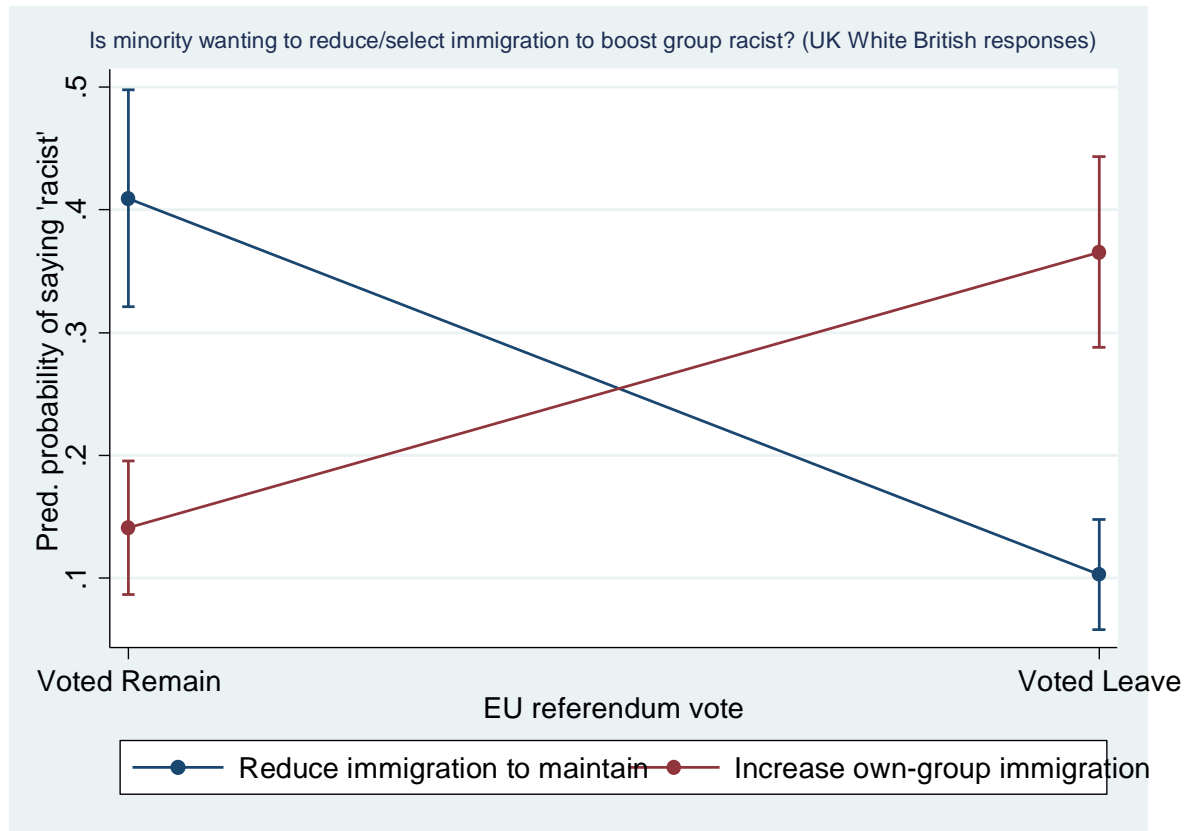
Figure 17.



Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=541.

We can perform the same exercise for minority immigration preferences. Once more, white British responses are skewed by partisanship. However, where white Clinton voters were somewhat more inconsistent than white Trump voters, white Remainers and Brexiteers are similarly inconsistent. That is, looking to the left side of figure 18, we find that white British Remainers have a 41% likelihood of thinking it is racist for minorities to want reduced immigration to maintain their share. This falls to 14% when the question asks about minorities seeking a higher intake to increase their numbers. Among white Leavers the reverse holds: 10% think it is racist for minorities to want reduced immigration to maintain their group however, 37% say it is racist when minorities want higher immigration to grow their group.

Figure 18.



Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=556.

Both ideological camps are similarly biased in the direction of their favoured policy, but taken as a whole, across all groups, for increases and decreases, white British Remainers are more likely to think group-oriented immigration preferences are racist (26%) than white British Leavers (17%). This is an important difference, but less noticeable than that between white Clinton voters (31%) and Trump voters (20%). This comports with an overall picture in which white liberals and conservatives both pursue motivated reasoning, but this is somewhat more severe for white liberals, especially in America.

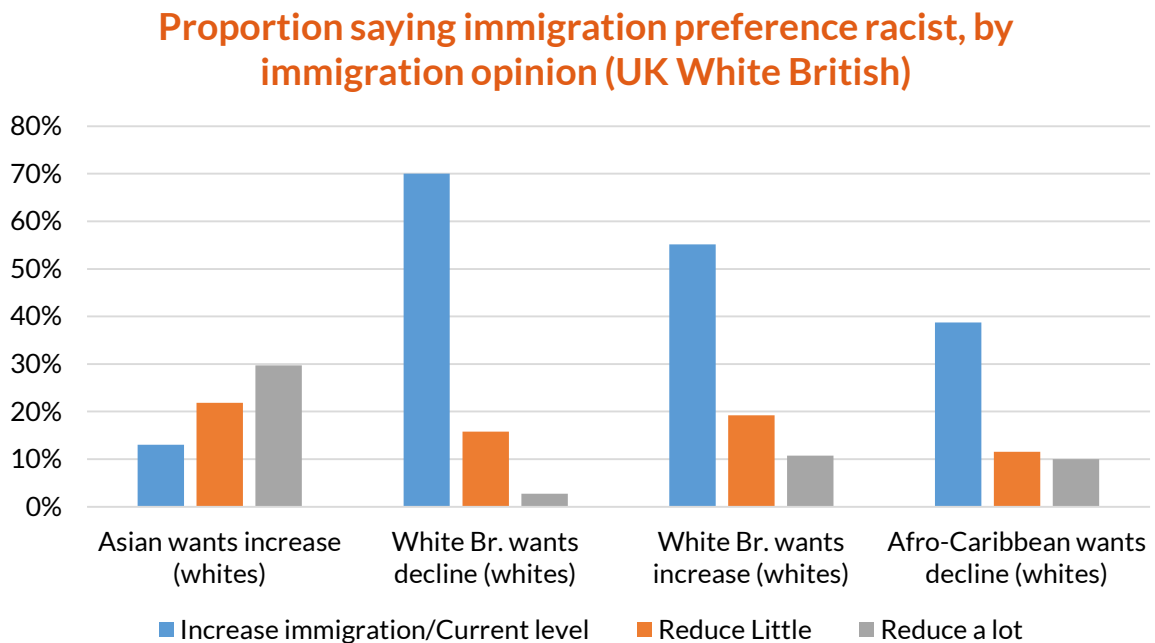
Immigration Opinion and Inconsistency

Nearly half of Remain voters want less immigration in Britain (92% of Leave voters do), thus it is instructive to see how perceptions of racism vary by immigration preference. As in the US, this was only asked of half the respondents, so the sample sizes - especially for minorities - must be treated with caution. Therefore, no minority numbers are shown.

In figure 19 we see steep slopes across the bars in each set, which tells us that one’s view of whether immigration to Britain should be reduced or increased matters greatly when it comes to perceiving whether own-group sentiment on the immigration issue is racist. Comparing figure 19 to figure 14, we see that immigration opinion cuts the data even more sharply than the Brexit-Remain divide. Recall that 46% of white British Remainers said it was racist for white British to seek reductions in immigration to preserve their group share as compared to 5% of white Leavers. This is a tenfold difference. In figure 19 we see from the second set of bars that the gap between pro- and anti-immigration white British respondents is 70% vs. 3%, a twenty-threefold difference.

Differences are also larger among pro- and anti-immigration whites than Remainers and Leavers on the question of white British seeking white commonwealth immigration to boost their share, with 55% of pro-immigration whites calling this racist against just 11% of anti-immigration whites (the analogous gap between Remainers and Leavers in figure 14 was 32-18). On Asians wanting increased immigration to boost their share, we find a gap of 30% to 13% between anti and pro-immigration whites, a similar distance to the 41-18 difference between white Leavers and Remainers noted in figure 14. Likewise, the distance is about the same in figures 14 and 19 for Afro-Caribbeans seeking reduced immigration.

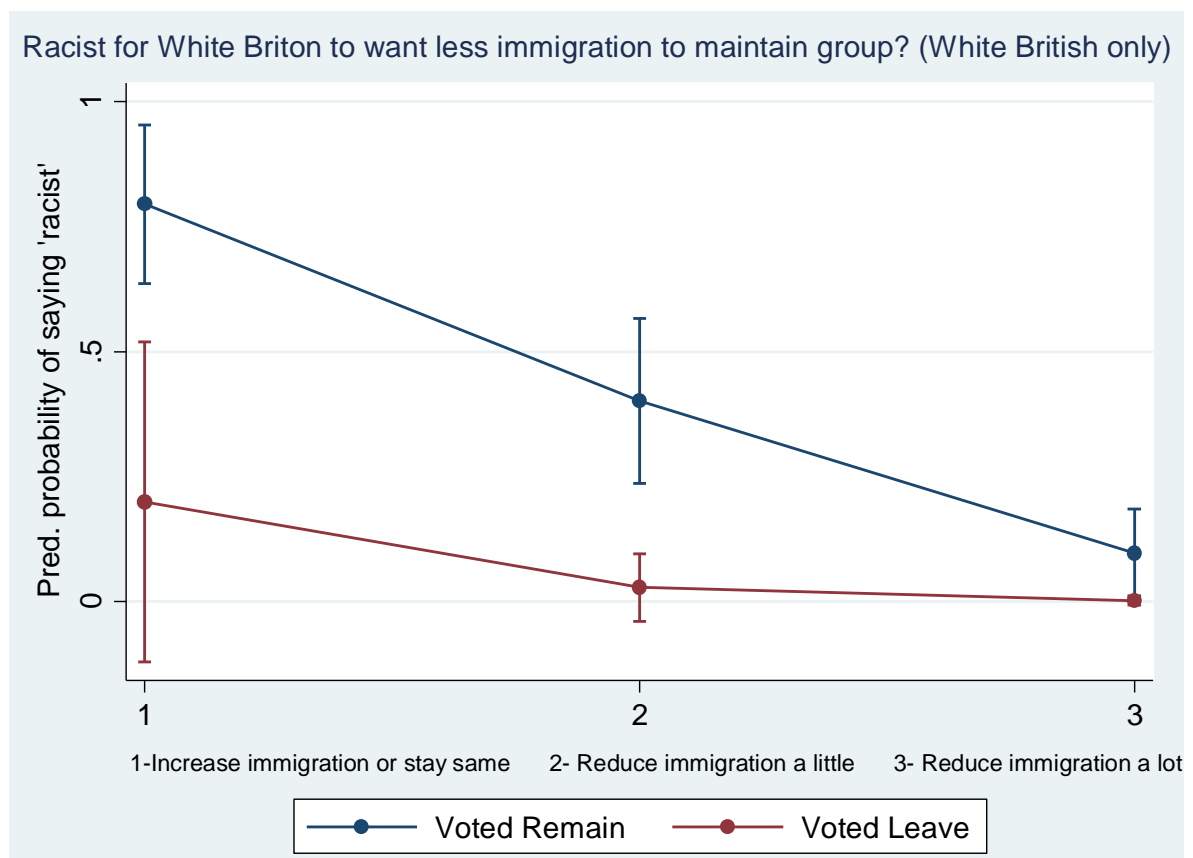
Figure 19.



Source: YouGov surveys. N (by set, left to right) = 129, 122, 111, 117.

As with previous analyses, controlling for demographic and social characteristics leaves the basic relationships unchanged. Immigration opinion and Brexit vote both make a difference to whether a white British person perceives a white Briton as racist. We see this in figure 20, where lines slope down from left to right, indicating that immigration opinion matters. But there is also a difference between the lines, showing that pro- and anti-immigration Remainers and Leavers differ in their appraisal. The few pro-immigration Leavers don't differ much from their anti-immigration confederates. What really stands out is the difference in the Remain camp: the chance of a pro-immigration Remainer saying a white person who wants immigration reduced to maintain their group's share is being racist is 64%, but this drops to only 18% among anti-immigration Remainers.

Figure 20.



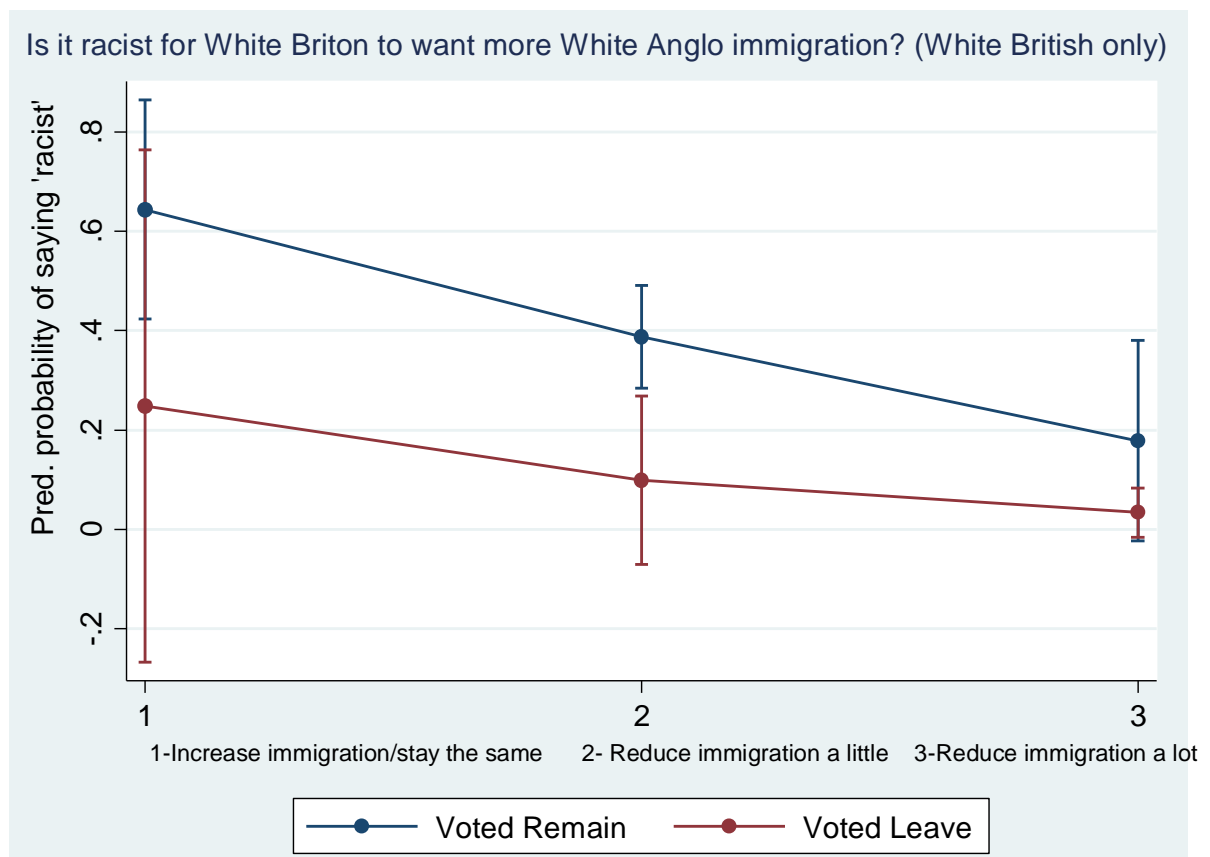
Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=78.

Overall, the numbers show that immigration opinion matters slightly more than Brexit for determining attitudes to racism. White British people who want immigration reduced a lot have only a 3% chance of saying it is racist for a white British person to want less immigration to maintain group share. Among white Britons favouring current or higher immigration, the likelihood of call this racist jumps to 69%. The equivalent probabilities for Brexit and Remain are 2% and

52%, a 50-point rather than 66-point gap. This suggests anti-racism plays an important part in the thinking of pro-immigration white Britons' on the immigration question. This likewise intimates that ethnic considerations brook large for anti-immigration whites – if not, more would have identified group-oriented motivations as racist.

A similar if less dramatic story can be told for the case of a white British person who wants more white Commonwealth immigration to boost group share. In this case, Brexit sentiment matters somewhat more than immigration opinion in governing whether someone perceives the person to be racist. Immigration opinion matters among both Remainers and Leavers for this perception as we see in figure 21. This shows pro-immigration Remainers have a 64% chance of considering selective, group-interested white immigration as racist compared to 18% for anti-immigration Remainers. The gap among Leavers is also noticeable: 25% among pro-immigration Leavers, 3% among anti-immigration Leavers. Again it appears that immigration sentiment counts for more of the variation in perceptions of racism among Remainers (46-point gap from right to left) than Leavers (22 point difference from right to left).

Figure 21.



Source: YouGov surveys. Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means. N=71.

UK: Summary

British data show that, as in America, partisanship – in this case over Remain/Leave rather than Clinton/Trump – is more important than race for driving public opinion on the immigration-racism nexus. In Britain, white British Remainers are 42 points more likely to say it is racist for a white Briton to want less immigration to maintain her group's share of the population than Leavers. Minority Britons are 30 points more likely to say so than white Britons, an important difference, but not quite as large as the partisan one.

Immigration and Racism in Britain and America

The views of minority Britons suggest that race matters in regard to the racism-immigration nexus in Britain in a way it does not in America. One reason could be that the majority of non-white British in Britain are immigrants whereas a much smaller share of non-white Americans are. Unfortunately we do not have data on birthplace which would allow us to determine whether birthplace is the critical difference between minorities in the two countries. However, American results do not differ much when African-Americans (largely a native group) are removed from the analysis.

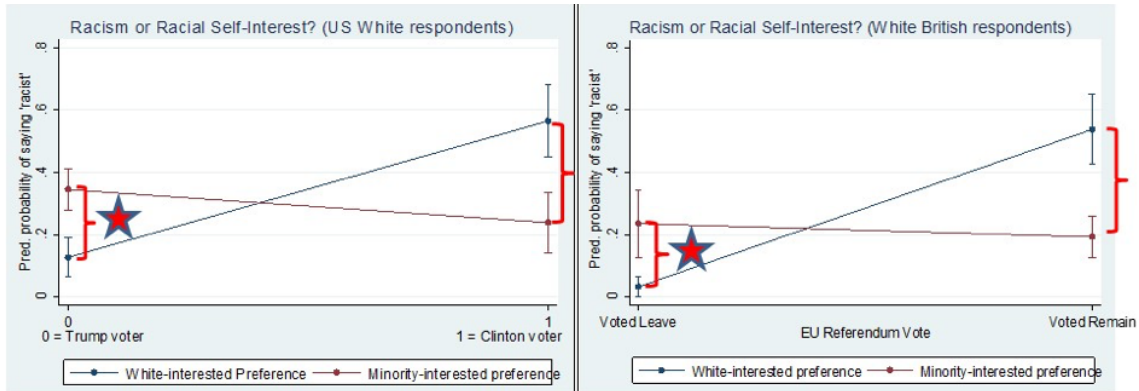
More importantly, we find that British respondents are less likely to view group-interested immigration preferences as racist than white Americans. Meanwhile partisan gaps – while large – are not as pronounced as in the United States, where white Clinton and Trump supporters have radically different perceptions of whether group-motivated preferences count as racism.

One way of comparing across countries is to look at a set of pairwise comparisons between white American and white British evaluations. Along the way, the aim is to form a judgment as to whether liberals or conservatives are more biased in their reasoning. To aid in interpreting the charts, there is a star next to the side which showed greater consistency in its judgments.

Figure 22 asks whether partisans showed a bias toward whites – in the case of conservatives – or minorities – in the case of liberals. The sample is limited to white liberals and conservatives to achieve a tighter 'apples to apples' comparison. The comparison shows in both countries, the red line is fairly flat. This means judgements as to whether minorities are being racist for pressing their ethno-demographic interests don't differ much by political stripe. The big slant concerns whether people think whites are being racist for doing the same thing. Here there is a massive gap of 50-60 points in both countries, though it is somewhat greater in Britain. Though both show bias, conservatives – Trump voters and Leave voters - are more consistent than liberals (Clinton voters and Remainers), as we can see from the smaller bracket height and the star at the left (Trump/Leave) side of each diagram.

Figure 22.

Whites' bias based on whether whites or minorities want to change immigration



US sample size = 568

UK sample size = 373

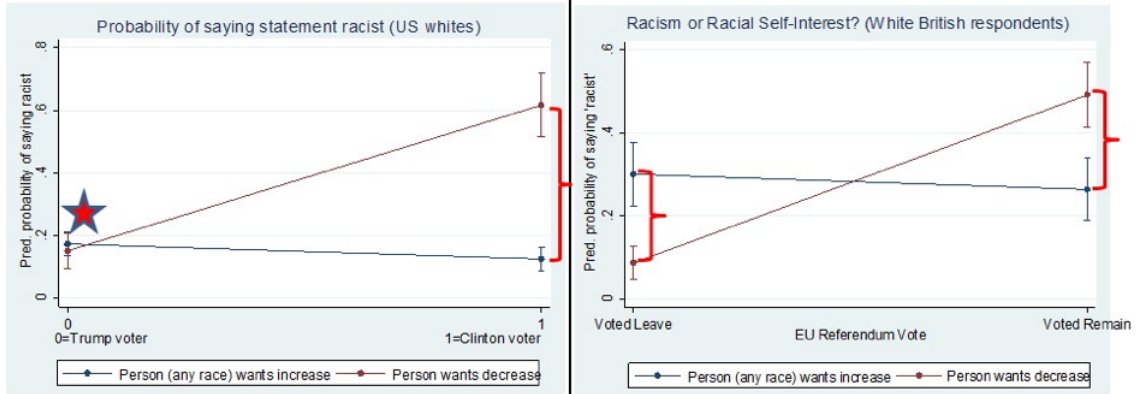
Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means.

Next we want to know what the inconsistency looks like based on whether people wanted immigration increased to boost their group or decreased to maintain their group. The story here, told in figure 23, is that partisan bias is worse in the US than Britain – especially among white American liberals. In the US, few on either side of the political divide think increasing immigration to boost one's group is racist. But when a person, whether white or minority, wants to reduce immigration to maintain their group share, this exposes large discrepancies in opinion. Barely 10 percent of white Trump voters but more than 60 percent of white Clinton voters consider this racist. While Trump voters treat those seeking an increase and a decrease quite even-handedly, Clinton voters heavily favour those seeking an increase.

Across the Atlantic in Britain, the blue line shows that the share of whites who consider it racist for people to want increased immigration to advantage their group is about ten points higher than in the US. As in America, there is a steep gradient to the red line, indicating that partisans are divided in pronouncing a verdict of racism when a person wants to reduce immigration to maintain their group. The difference between Leavers, only around 10 percent of whom think reducing numbers is racist, and Remainers, of whom 50 percent share this sentiment, is 40 points. Thus white Britons are 10 points less partisan on this question than white Americans. Comparing the brackets on both sides of the right-hand graph shows that both Leavers and Remainers have a 20-point bias in favour of their preferred policy (increase vs. reduce respectively). Thus both camps are equally biased, in contrast to America, where white Clinton voters are considerably less consistent than white Trump voters.

Figure 23.

Whites' bias depending on whether a person wants immigration increased to boost group or reduced to maintain group



US sample size = 1049

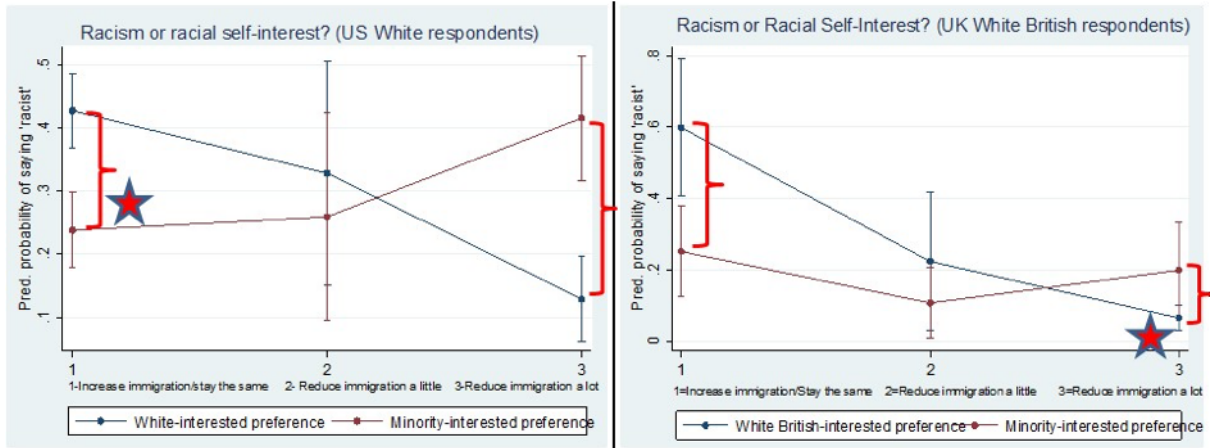
US sample size = 735

Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means.

When partisanship is defined not as voting behaviour but based on immigration opinion, we find many similarities but also some differences. In terms of similarities, the steep gradient on the blue lines in figure 24 tells us that opinion is more divided over white than minority ethno-demographic advocacy. Whites who want immigration increased or maintained at current levels in both countries are 30 points (US) to 50 points (Britain) more likely than whites who want immigration reduced a lot to call white group-oriented immigration preferences (increasing white Anglo immigration or decreasing immigration) racist. This means the immigration opinion divide on the racism-immigration question is greater in Britain. Another important trans-Atlantic difference is that white American restrictionists treat group claims more inconsistently than white British restrictionists. As the brackets and star show for the American graph, this is an instance of where white liberals are more consistent in their judgements than white conservatives. In Britain, however, immigration restrictionists display a smaller gap than immigration liberals, showing them to be less biased toward the claims of a particular racial group.

Figure 24.

Whites' bias based on whether whites or minorities want to change immigration



US sample size = 707

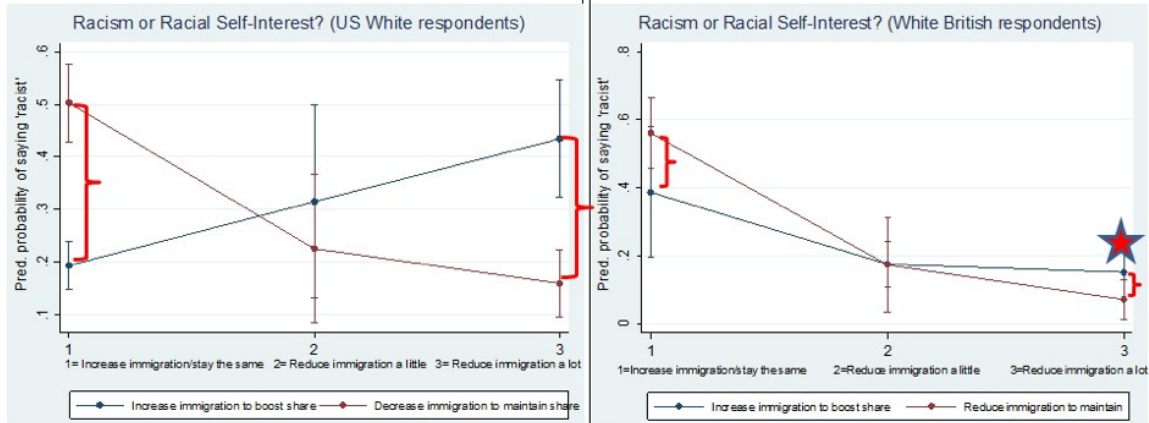
US sample size = 323

Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means.

Finally, figure 25 repeats the above analysis to detect bias toward those, of any race, who favour increasing or decreasing immigration for ethno-demographic reasons. We see a similar downward-sloping red line in both countries. This illustrates, as we would expect, that anti-immigration whites are less likely than pro-immigration whites to tag respondents wanting lower immigration as racist. The drop in the blue line from top to bottom is somewhat greater in Britain than America, suggesting more polarization on this question by immigration opinion in the UK. The two countries also part company over the question of using group-biased immigration to boost group share. In America, restrictionist whites are about 25 points more likely to see this as racist than pro-immigration whites. In Britain, restrictionist whites are about 20 points less likely to see this as racist than pro-immigration whites. All of which means that inconsistency among pro- and anti-immigration partisans is about equal in America, but, as the star comparing bracket size shows in the right graph, white British liberals are slightly more inconsistent in their application of the racist label than white British restrictionists.

Figure 25.

Whites' bias depending on whether a person wants immigration increased to boost group or reduced to maintain group



US sample size = 707

US sample size = 344

Predicted probability of responding 'racist' rather than racial self-interest, with demographic characteristics held at their means.

This comparison of results reveals several things. First, the biggest divisions tend to be over white preferences and reducing immigration. Immigration liberals and conservatives are somewhat more divided in Britain than America. That is, the difference between the top and bottom points of the red and blue lines is greater for the right-hand chart in figures 20,22 and 23. The difference between liberals and conservatives is never less than 30 points, and in several cases exceeds 50 points.

Second, white liberals are less consistent in their application of the racist label than white conservatives. In five of the eight charts in figures 22-25, the star goes to the conservative side, in two instances the group's bracket sizes are about equal, and in only one case – pro-immigration Americans in figure 24 – is liberal bias lower.

In addition, in all four comparisons, white liberals are more likely than white conservatives to label a person's actions racist rather than racially-self-interested, regardless of race or policy preference. In America, controlling for socio-demographics and state, white Clinton voters are 13 points more likely to deliver a racist verdict. In Britain, Remainers detect racism 18 points more often than Leavers. Using immigration views as the yardstick, the UK sticks out: pro-immigration whites are 4 points more likely in America, but 36 points more likely in Britain, to view a statement as racist compared to anti-immigration whites. This suggests that the motivation to describe one of the racially self-interested statements as racist is driven more by partisanship in America and immigration opinion in Britain.

The questions were very explicit about specifying that the subject in each question wants particular policies in order to preserve or enhance her group's demographic share. In this sense, the 'correct' answer is that people are 'acting in their racial self-interest, which is not racist.' It is possible – and consistent – for someone to consider all racially self-interested behaviour racist. But the variation in white liberal responses based on whether the question pertains to whites or minorities, belies this rational explanation. Overall, while partisans on all sides are biased, the racism-immigration nexus is one in which white liberals are more swayed by partisan-motivated reasoning than white conservatives.

Can People Adjust their Views to be more Consistent?

In the YouGov conjoint analysis, half the sample questions were asked as standalone items. For instance, people only saw a question about, say, whites wanting a decrease or Asians wanting an increase. In the second half of each sample, questions appear in pairs so that a person would have to sequentially answer questions on, say, whether Hispanics wanting more of their own coming to the country are racist and whether whites wanting fewer others to maintain their share are being racist. Did juxtaposing two similar questions, albeit with different subject groups, make any difference to people's answers?

To some extent. By making people examine the contradictions between their choices, the proportion of white Clinton voters who said whites' attempt to increase immigration from Europe was racist dropped from 45% to 26%. Meanwhile, the share of white Trump voters agreeing rose - from just 13% saying whites who want to increase European immigration are racist to 26%. This left the two sides in bipartisan agreement. Thus having to answer sequential questions about racism and immigration for different groups brought partisans to the same position regarding whether a white desire for more European immigration is racist. It did not, however, alter their views on the more politicised question of whether wanting less immigration is racist: in this case both Trump and Clinton voters, despite reading the questions one after the other, did not alter their assessments.

In Britain, white Remainers responded most to being presented with sequential questions on whites and minorities. The share of Remainers calling whites who want more immigration from white Anglo countries racist dropped from 45% to 25% when the white immigration increase question was asked alongside a similar one for Asians or Caribbeans. Almost 9% more Remainers (20% v. 11%) now also agreed that minorities who call for immigration increases for group-related reasons are racist.

There was minor movement, though less, in Remainers' assessment of whites who want less immigration. When answering alongside questions about Asians or Afro-Caribbeans wanting decreased immigration, the share of Remainers calling

the white British desire for restriction racist dropped from 50% to 45%. This was not, however, enough of a shift to rule out the possibility it occurred by chance. Meanwhile, Brexiteers showed no tendency toward more consistent responses when reading questions about whites and minorities sequentially.

Therefore, as in America, respondents were willing to change their opinions on the question of whether selective increases in immigration are racist, but not on the hot button issue of whether restricting immigration is racist.

Justify Your Answer: examining qualitative evidence

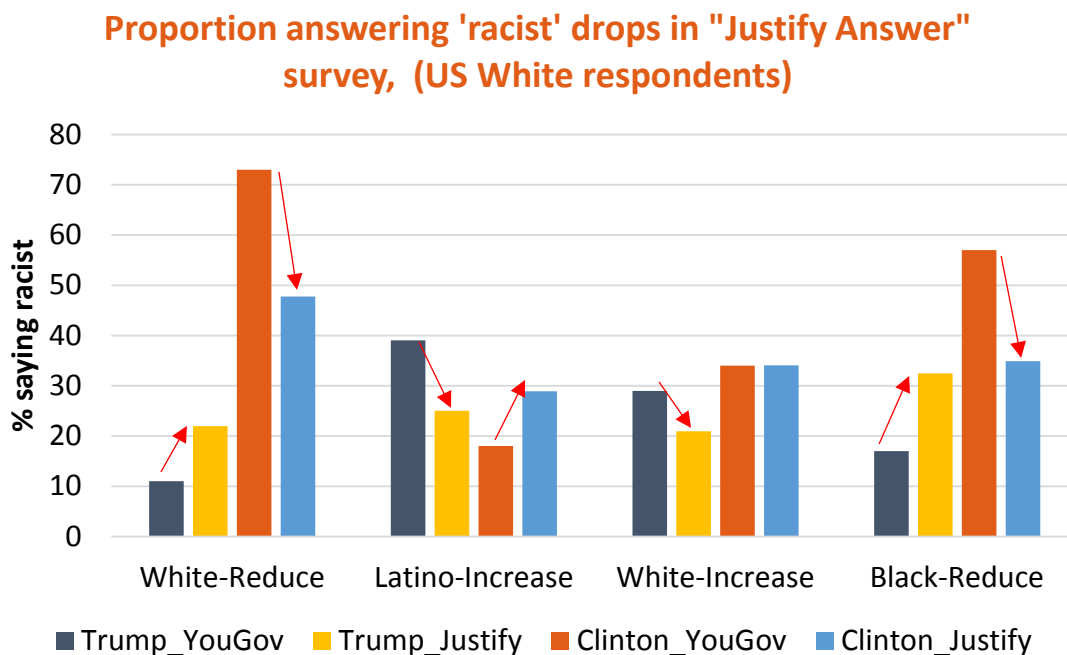
Answering questions sequentially might spur deliberation, but, equally, the speed with which paid respondents answer survey questions may make it less likely that they will take the time to reflect. Therefore, people were asked to respond to a sequence of four questions, then justify their answers in an open text box. The questions began with whether Hispanic person should be considered racist for wanting an increase in Latin American immigration. The next question asked about a white person wanting more European immigration, followed by one on an African-American wanting a decrease and finally a white American wanting a decrease. This was conducted on a sample of 200 American respondents recruited through MTurk (a disproportionately liberal sample). The textbox asks: 'Please explain in a paragraph why you answered questions 25 to 28 as you did. If the answers were not all the same, tell us why. If they were the same, tell us whether you think the distinction between racism and racial self-interest is meaningful for you.'

The results were quite dramatic. Just 48% of white Clinton voters said it was racist for whites to want reduced immigration to maintain their group. This compares to 73% of white Clinton voters in the YouGov sample, a dramatic decrease. Meanwhile 29% of white Clinton voters now said it was racist for Latinos to want more Latin American immigration to increase their group share, considerably more than the 18% in the YouGov sample. Similarly, white Clintonian perceptions of African-Americans as racist for restricting immigration to maintain group share go from 58% in the YouGov sample to 35% in the MTurk sample when asked to justify their choices.

Trump voters also seem to have adjusted their views. 22% of white Trump voters now said it was racist for whites to want less immigration to maintain group share compared to just 11% in the YouGov sample. Whereas 39% called Latinos racist on the YouGov survey for wanting more Latin American immigration to boost group share, the level in the MTurk sample – where people are asked to justify their responses – was just 25%. So we see a much higher level of consistency when people are asked to answer four sequential questions and explain the pattern of their answers. This is unlikely to be an artefact of the two survey samples because we would expect liberal bias to move all responses (ie white v minority examples) in the same partisan direction rather than narrowing the gap.

This is clear when observing the arrows in figure 26 which all, with the sole exception of whites seeking increased European immigration, point in the direction of evening out gaps across bars within each set. If you look at the paler bars (MTurk survey) in each set in figure 26, there is, with just one exception, much less variation across the categories than is true for the darker (YouGov) bars. This is a strong and significant effect, suggesting that when people are compelled to reflect, they iron out much of their bias to arrive at a more uniform appraisal across races and between proposed immigration increases and decreases.

Figure 26.



Source: YouGov and MTurk surveys.

Not only are answers more consistent, but the overall level of perceived racism declines somewhat, suggesting most people do not see groups acting in their collective interest on immigration policy to be racist.

Qualitative Evidence

An important component of the MTurk survey is the compulsory textbox, where respondents are asked to justify their answers. With quantitative data, it is important to try to elicit qualitative evidence to arrive at the meanings survey respondents attach to their answers. Recall that Mechanical Turk samples are skewed toward white liberals. This is useful, because white American liberals are the group displaying the largest degree of bias in the YouGov survey.

White Liberal Inconsistency

How do white liberals justify calling those who wish to restrict immigration racist while those who desire selective immigration to boost their group are considered racially self-interested? And why do they judge white own-group immigration politics more harshly than minority own-group immigration politics? Let us consider each in turn.

Restriction versus Increase

Here are several responses which best illuminate the sources of white liberal bias on the decrease/increase question in America, which, as we saw in figure 5, runs to 50 points. Most who claim restriction alone is racist do so because they think it is illiberal, or because they presume that the restrictionist is motivated by the desire to exclude a particular outgroup.

Restriction as illiberal:

"I think the difference is whether the person is acting in a way that will benefit others (question 25) or acting in a way that will restrict the freedoms of others (as in the others)"

"I'm not sure about the ones wanting to increase their own group's immigration. It could be because they just want to see more people of their group or it could be motivated by racism. It isn't clear to me. The ones wanting to reduce immigration seem like racism since they are making a choice that has a direct negative effect on other groups."

"The idea of allowing others to have the same chances that you've had are not particularly racist, but the idea of limiting others from coming to America because you've already had the chance and established yourself can be."

"I think wanting more of your same race to enter isn't necessarily racist because it's not focused on restricting others. So to me that makes the difference between whether it seems racist or not. On the other hand, not wanting immigrants to enter because they are not your race seems xenophobic and restricting. I'm hesitant to actually call it racism though which is why I put "don't know," but I'm less favorable to this outlook since it seems more actively discriminating."

"Self-interest is when you are looking to improve yourself etc., racist is when you're preventing others the ability to improve themselves"

"I think anyone trying to reduce immigration is being selfish and bias in one way or another. We're all immigrants."

"I think increasing your cultural and racial imprint on the society is fine, and would hopefully add to diversity that co-mingles with other races. However, I think when you try and block other people with the purpose of strengthening your own race, it becomes somewhat racist to do so."

"I don't think any of the people were being racist except for the last one, the person who wants to reduce immigration to maintain her group's share of the population. Wanting to help people that are similar to you isn't a big deal, but actively trying to keep other races out is racist."

Restriction implies targeting particular groups:

"I'm not sure if racial self-interest is racist, but trying to stop immigrants of a certain race (e.g. Hispanics) is racist."

"I guess I just feel that wanting to include more people of your race isn't really racist, but wanting to exclude others because of racist (sic) is racist. If I invited 10 people to my house, and they were all white that wouldn't be racist. If I invited 10 white people to my house, and told them not to bring any non-white people that would be really racist."

"Since both were concerned with increasing immigration rather than preventing other groups from getting in, I decided to avoid calling them racist policies...For [restrictionist options], I chose that the action was racist because blocking immigration of groups deemed "undesirable" by another racial group has more of a racist feeling to it than trying to bring other members of your group to the country."

These responses indicate that these white liberal respondents are defining racism expansively to cover any preferences which constrain the liberty of individuals to immigrate, or are reading hostility to minorities into the mind of the subject in question despite the fact the subject's racially self-interested motivation is clearly stated.

White versus Minority

Most white liberals who gave different answers for whites and minorities justified their choice on the basis of racial egalitarianism: that whites wanted dominance while minorities sought the numbers to place them on an equal footing with whites. This entails viewing identity politics exclusively through the prism of power, in which whites desire supremacy to exploit minorities.

White Desire for Dominance

"Racism is more applicable regarding the white people in the situations because institutionally they have more advantages than people of colour. For the most part I think minority races generally are only trying to better themselves or their race/ethnic background. Whites on the other hand somewhat (can't say totally) seem to be insistent on holding onto their majority grip of the country and seem to be willing to fight to make sure it's not removed. We can clearly see this is what happened in the last presidential campaign."

"Racism refers to an imbalance in structural power, which racial minorities do not have, and probably still won't have even if white people stop being the majority by number. I assume the people in #27 and #29 want to increase the number of their racial group

because they want to stop being marginalized so hard. White people on the other hand have only white supremacy as a possible reason to increase white numbers.”

“The white person's support for bringing in more Europeans is to maintain power over other racial groups, while the Hispanic person wants her group to gain power to bring them on an equal foothold with whites.”

“Since whites are the majority, I feel that it's only fair that they are considered racist for wanting to downgrade immigration. [Minority] racial self-interest is not being racist, as it's only for that person wanting more equality and more say in public affairs, as whites have the majority already.”

“I don't think it's racist, maybe for white people it's racist because they have the majority.”

In other instances, respondents attributed racist intent to whites, making this association despite the question wording:

“I think it depends greatly on the person. I don't think wanting to maintain a majority is necessarily racist but in a lot of cases the intent is racist.”

“I can't know the motivations of those who seek to reduce immigration or to add to the numbers of those of their own race. The closest to being racist of the examples given is no. 30, the white person who seeks to reduce immigration so as to preserve the same proportion of white people.”

Or justified their choices by reference to whites' oppressive conduct in the past:

“Of course it is worse when white people do it because at least in the case of the others they have been historically oppressed”

White guilt was a rare motivation, but turned up occasionally:

“I personally don't understand how some people cannot understand that we are, first and foremost, a nation of immigrants. I know several undocumented folks, and they are - in every way - equal to me and my other "legal friends". Look, I'm white. We've had our run. We messed things up pretty badly”

A final justification for calling white group-interested desire for more European immigration racist but not minority group-interested desire for non-European immigration racist is that the white person's sentiments in the example are shared by white supremacists:

“White groups trying to increase their share of the population is often supported by white supremacists.”

White Conservative Inconsistency

White conservative inconsistency, while less common than white liberal inconsistency, turned up in several instances. Respondents either expressed a strong anti-immigration policy preference or a white nationalism based on having built the country – all with little justification for why minorities' desire to increase immigration should be termed racist. There are also two instances where respondents are fearful of minority retribution.

Anti-immigration preference

"What I have an issue with is the immigrants who are here illegally, and who think they have the right to stay and receive government benefits. I'm not opposed, but there needs to be stricter laws about how and why immigrants are allowed in the United States."

"I wish to decrease immigration we have to many people her now. That is just my opinion on immigration it should be decreased."

White nationalism

"America should be a white nation but others are trying to commit white genocide."

"America is built on white people building the backbone of this country. Other immigrants come here and mostly do good but they do it in a country that built on white people."

"I believe that America should be kept as a white nation and minorities should be just that, minorities and not majorities."

Fear of retribution

"As a white person it makes me nervous more than sad to not be the majority any more. I do not consider myself a racist and I strive to not consider the color of a person in my daily dealings, but I know most people do. I don't want it to turn into a situation of groups feeling like they need to pay back whites and make us suffer for years of perceived injustice."

"I answered that a shrinking white majority population would make me sad as I feel that "minorities" will not treat us with any sort of decency once it reaches that point. Even though we've made mistakes we have tried to make amends for it, I don't feel like the same thing will happen for us, especially seeing the way we're treated in European countries right now that are being flooded with immigrants."

"I like that whites are the majority because I am white and I do not want to lose being the majority because I think it'll make it harder for whites voices to be heard"

What of the consistent responses? Here we see a clear distinction between classical liberals and communitarians which political theorists would recognise as

broadly consistent arguments. Liberals view all own-group behaviour as racist while communitarians accept that group-oriented behaviour is normal or natural. Responses on both sides came from those of different political orientations, but Trump voters were greatly overrepresented in the communitarian category and Clinton supporters brooked large in the liberal category. Since most responses were consistent in the MTurk sample, I only present a sample to highlight the main forms of argument.

Classical Liberals

"I think it's racist because the individual feels divided from other races and in competition with them. It'd be the same as wanting an only white or only black school. It's dividing individuals just to divide for no real reason. Racial self-interest? How is that not racist by itself?"

"Being "motivated to maintain [their] group's share of America's population" is racist. I do not care what race someone is or what the racial percentages look like. I am only concerned with immigrants who are under-educated, contribute to the statistics that the under-educated are stereotyped for like crime, poverty, and excessively large families, and do not integrate with Americans."

"Any focus on bettering your race vs. others is racist. There is no relevant difference between races. Races don't have any inherent value. Valuing your "racial self-interest" is absurd."

"Those making decisions on the basis of 'helping their race' is definitionally racist."

"One should not favour one race over another, whether it's your race or someone else's. I don't think is right and its racist either way."

Communitarians

Among those giving communitarian responses, most answered that favouring one's own group was not racist because it did not stigmatise other groups, or that it was normal to feel more comfortable with one's own group and to want to advance it. Some also added that there was a taboo around discussion of race, especially white racism, which could not be justified.

Own-Group Preference Does Not Imply Out-Group Enmity

"I didn't find anything about those questions racist, it didn't say anything about those people hating on another race, just they wanted more people like themselves around."

"Racism is the being prejudicial towards other races. Trying to increase immigration populations isn't being prejudicial to another race."

"The motives weren't based on any sort of perception that other races were inferior or less worthy. They were instead cold calculations based on social blocks and relative voting power."

"If their reasons were targeting a specific race or races, then it'd be racist."

"Racist would imply that they think that their racial group is somewhat superior. Racial self-interest implies the person simply wants more people of their own race."

"Wanting more people from your ethnicity to move to America is not racist. Being racist means that you believe with 100% certainty that your race is superior to that of another race."

"Racism is a hatred towards a race in general, but in these examples with wanting an advantage for their race is self-serving in a way but doesn't depict hatred towards another group."

"Self-interest is protecting and growing what you have not actively doing something to the other race in order to get ahead."

"Racism is treating those of another race unfairly, or negatively. Trying to protect your own interests is not racist."

"Racism is treating another person badly because of their race. Racial self-interest is wanting what is best for your group as long as it does not harm another group."

"I chose to pick the options of not being racist in those questions for a very good reason. It's not being racist if you want to lesser immigration in the United States. It would be racist if these groups thought they were better than others but from the information given this doesn't seem to be the case. Making sure your group has a good standing in America doesn't mean you hate all other races."

"Well, racism is thinking that your racial grouping is superior to other racial groupings. I don't think that you necessarily need to believe in racial superiority to have self-interest on racial grounds."

"I think racism is about hate and looking down upon people from other races which is different than racial self-interest which is not about hating other races but instead is just looking out for oneself because I think people of the same race tend to stick together more so it's natural for people to want to try to preserve a majority so those interests can be met."

"I don't believe there's anything wrong with supporting and loving your race and wanting there to be more people of your race in the country where you live. I think racism only comes alive when you think your race is better than others and you begin to put down, judge and demean other races different from your own."

"For me personally, I could understand someone who would want their race to be the majority for racial self-interest - no one wants to feel like a minority. The difference with this and someone who is racist is the person who is racist usually has anger and disdain towards other races and their mental motivation is more about having power over other races."

Racial Preference as Natural

"I think that people will automatically do what is in the best interest for their race...doesn't mean they are racist. It just means they want what is best for their race."

"All of my answers were the same and that the situations weren't racist because I think it's human nature to want to be around similar others."

"I don't think that wanting more of your own race to immigrate to this country is racist. People identify and relate to members of their race best. It is natural to want more members of your own race to be near you."

"We all have our racial identity. We have to respect that....Individuals and groups have an inherent need for self-preservation, because (other than in relatively rare occurrences) no individual or group wishes to lessen their existence. A more useful perspective is to see that everyone has similar goals related to survival and well-being, regardless of race."

"I think for the most part, people tend to stick with which they identify because it's comfortable and familiar."

"People generally like to stick with the familiar. I don't think this makes them racist, but just afraid of the unknown. They want to have more people like them."

"Just because someone wants to be around more of their race doesn't make them racist. They might just feel more comfortable being around people who share common ground with them. I know that personally I enjoy being around more people of my race because our cultures are more likely to be compatible."

"I think that everyone whether whites or black just care about their own groups. Nothing wrong with that."

"I think people can love their race without being racist."

Racism as Societal Obsession

A number of respondents felt that American society moves too quickly to judge people as racist:

"I don't think everything needs to be racist these days. Anything that happens it is considered racist. I think people can just be concerned about the population and race in general without it being racist towards other people."

"We're too quick to label people racists. Some people just don't like change. Sometimes people just need the benefit of the doubt rather than being labelled something."

"Race is considered both a taboo topic in the United States and one that the public is urged to obsess about... because otherwise they might develop (shudder) CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS."

“Just because someone has pride in their race doesn't make them racist. Everyone thinks everything is racist now, it is not. It is a major issue with society.”

“Racism is technically thinking that certain racial groups are better or worse than others. But there's nothing here about better/worse, just interest in proportion and being different. Also I'm not into the "only whites can be racist" stuff, either everyone is or no one is.”

Minority Views

Minority respondents tended to align along similar lines as whites, with the caveat that there was not a single example of a minority respondent citing ‘white privilege’ or structural racism to justify a view that white but not minority own-group preferences are racist. This claim therefore seems more aligned to the worldviews of white than minority liberals. Overall, there were fewer inconsistent minority responses than white responses. One respondent cited illiberalism as a reason to call restriction racist rather than selective entry:

“I think trying to increase immigration is just acting in their self-interest because they are only trying to make sure other people will have a better quality of life by immigrating to the US. However, trying to reduce immigration is racist because they are preventing people of other race from having better lives by immigrating to the US.”

There were numerous minority classical liberals such as:

“I am a minority and an American but I think this whole racial stuff is divisive. We are Americans. I'm not the same as other Hispanics just as not all whites are the same as white people even in the same geographic location or even the same house. Everyone is different and everyone is similar. A Hispanic could be more like a white or black than another Hispanic and I believe that is more important than to divide everything by race. Also, racial self-interest or racism doesn't matter to me. There are more important issues.”

Or communitarian ones, which were also common:

““Racism” is proclaiming the inherent superiority of one race over another, or all others (not merely “preferring” one race over another).”

“Racial self-interest just means they want to feel more common. Less unique. Racism is an active hate towards another group. There is a difference but a fine line as well.”

Others remarked on society’s racial obsessions:

“Some people determine other people as “racist” so easily. If we become too sensitive toward those emotions, we will lose the freedom of speech in some way.”

Finally, one white respondent offered an insight into why answers were more consistent when people were confronted with four sequential questions and asked to justify their choices.

“This actually made me look at this subject from a slightly different perspective. I chose the answers I did, because while many people would make those choices out of racism, I can also see the "racial self-interest" angle.”

Conclusion

This research was informed by two pressing questions. First, to what extent do people associate opposition to immigration with racism, and how does this vary by ethnicity and partisanship? Second, arising from Hamid’s observations, how consistently do people make judgements about whether people are acting in a racist or racially self-interested manner? The racism mapping and conjoint analyses sketch a portrait of anti-racist sentiment in relation to the immigration question which reveals a considerable amount of bias, driven by ‘fast-thinking’ reflexes linked to partisanship and immigration policy preferences. Ethnoracial background, despite the nature of the questions, matters less than political attitudes.

White liberal bias is greater than white conservative bias and Americans are more likely to call racially self-interested immigration preferences racist than Britons. In gross terms, white Trump and Clinton supporters differ by 62 points over the question of whether it is racist for white Americans to want to reduce immigration to maintain their group. Pro-immigration white British people are 66 points more likely to call white British group-interested reduction racist than those who want immigration reduced a lot.

Qualitative data shows that white liberals with inconsistent positions for white and minority subjects hold to a power-centred worldview in which whites who want to maintain group share are believed to be seeking domination while minorities who want more immigration are viewed as pursuing equality. Other white liberals argue that whites are driven by outgroup antipathy whereas minorities are motivated solely by attachment to their ingroup. Liberals who favour subjects wanting more immigration to strengthen their group over those wanting a decrease to maintain theirs frequently justify this on the grounds that immigration restriction is illiberal, and therefore racist. Conservatives who accuse minorities of wanting more immigration to bolster their group of racism while neglecting to say the same about whites wanting less immigration tend to justify this on the basis of either white nationalism or anti-immigration policy preferences.

Importantly, when asked to answer a sequence of four similar questions on racism-immigration involving different groups and both increases and decreases, and when prompted to explain one’s pattern of answers, much of the bias was reduced. Indeed, on some questions, complete bipartisanship was achieved between Trump and Clinton supporters. This suggests progress can be made in reducing the difference between partisans and opening up a rational conversation about racial self-interest.

These results carry several important implications:

- Political values, not ethnic or racial background, are the main determinant of whether someone views group-oriented immigration preferences as racist.
- On the question of whether group-oriented immigration preferences are racist, white liberals are more biased than white conservatives. We know white conservatives are more likely to fear terrorism or crime. However, this study suggests that on other issues white liberals can be less rational than conservatives, imputing white racist motivations to those trying to advance their racial self-interest.
- The 'dual-process' model in social psychology argues that many attitudes, such as antiracism, are the product of conscious control, i.e. a determination to control racial prejudice, over unconscious drives such as ethnic boundary defence.³⁰ Given these results, it is likely that perceptions of whether immigration is racist or not are exerting an important influence on people's attitudes to immigration in the West. Should norms change, we may see major shifts in public opinion in the direction of either restriction or liberalism, with attendant repercussions for western politics and party systems.
- The rise of the populist right in the West has been fuelled in large measure by concern over immigration and ethnic change.³¹ Now more than ever it is important to draw a distinction between irrational racism and rational group self-interest. Wanting fewer people from other ethnic groups or higher numbers of co-ethnics to bolster one's group share is not racist – even if it runs counter to liberalism or the national interest.
- In setting immigration policy, it is arguably better to acknowledge competing group interests than to suppress them in the name of antiracism or force proponents to couch their claims as material concerns. The majority tends to be demographically disadvantaged by immigration since most immigrants are from other ethnic groups. On the other hand, the direction of assimilation strongly favours the majority. Ideally, both these factors could be measured and taken into consideration when making policy. Immigration interests are not just ethnoracial, but partisan as well. That is, minority conservatives have more restrictionist immigration preferences than white liberals.
- Group-based sentiments should be considered rather than vilified. However, it should be emphasised that there are wider national interests at stake, which may favour larger or smaller inflows. These should not simply override group interests, but should balance those interests when it comes to setting immigration policy.

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