**Abstract**

This thesis examines opinion polarization, focusing on attitudes towards immigration in Europe. It investigates the question of increasing polarization across the continent, utilizing longitudinal data from the European Social Survey (ESS) and a custom-made exploratory web application. The study employs seven polarization metrics, including a newly developed measure based on Principal Component Analysis, that incorporates Likert-scale values. A comparative analysis is presented, contrasting European averages with the specific cases of Germany and Hungary. The 2015 refugee crisis is identified as a major factor influencing polarization trends. The findings reveal increases in nearly all polarization metrics following 2015. In addition, the analysis explores the role of economic factors in Germany and observes notable fluctuations in polarization levels in Hungary.

**Keywords**: Computational Social Science, Immigration Opinion Polarization, European Social Survey (ESS), Germany, Hungary, Refugee Crisis, R, Shiny