Are Immigrants more Left leaning than Natives

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We analyze whether second-generation immigrants have different political preferences relative to observationally identical children of citizens in the host countries. Using data on individual voting behavior in 22 European countries between 2001 and 2017, we characterize each vote on a left-right scale based on the ideological and policy positions of the party receiving the vote. In the first part of the paper, we characterize the size of the "left-wing bias" in the vote of second-generation immigrants after controlling for a large set of individual characteristics and origin and destination country fixed effects. We find a significant left-wing bias of second-generation immigrants, comparable in magnitude to the left-wing bias associated with living in urban (rather than rural) areas. We then show that this left-wing bias is associated with stronger preferences for inequality-reducing government intervention, internationalism and multiculturalism. We do not find that second-generation immigrants are biased towards or away from populist political agendas.

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