A Look Into Icelandic Sentiment Towards Its Rising Immigrant Population In Conjunction with the Tourism Explosion, 2004-2018.

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Introduction

In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, the World Travel and Tourism Council has emphasized "*destination stewardship*", which they describe as an "approach that balances and meets the needs of a destination", achieved with participation from both the public and private sectors of local communities (WTTC, 2021). Without taking into account the travel restrictions and travel bans initiated by the pandemic, volumes of tourist activity among popular destinations around the globe within the past decade have increased, facilitating a tourist boom - a phenomenon the WTTC terms as "*overtourism*". Overtourism often focuses on the negative impacts of tourism developments that particularly cause conflict between tourists and residents. For some local communities, this has led to somewhat of phobia of tourists. At the same time, the international migrant population globally has also increased in the past decade. This has partially been driven by *push and pull* factors rooted in the socio-political sphere and economic perspectives (Castelli, 2018). War, conflict, and persecution due to factors such as religion and political beliefs is a significant antecedent that *push* many people to emigrate from their home country and seek asylum in another. On the other hand, a country promising a better life and a higher standard of living in terms of educational and employment aspects *pull in* people from countries where those factors are limited (Castelli, 2018; UNDESA, 2020).

This growth in both immigration and tourism is especially noted in Iceland, a small country in the north Atlantic that was, until relatively recently, obscure to the rest of the world. Prior to the 21st century, there was little immigration and tourist activity for the largely homogenous country, with only a little over 2 percent of the population being immigrants during the bulk of the 1900s. As a geographically isolated region, there was historically more emigration than immigration in the country (Statistics Iceland, 2020). Iceland started the 2010s with less than 10% of its population classified as immigrants. Throughout the decade, this percentage steadily climbed to 15.2% in 2020 (Statistics Iceland, 2020). The country also saw the number of tourists flying in through Keflavik National Airport quadruple from around 500,000 in the early 2000s to more than 2 million in 2018. (Icelandic Tourist Board, 2020). As with any destination, the increase of these numbers come with significant changes in the development of the country - these include shifts in the economy, infrastructure, workforce, environment, security, and policy.

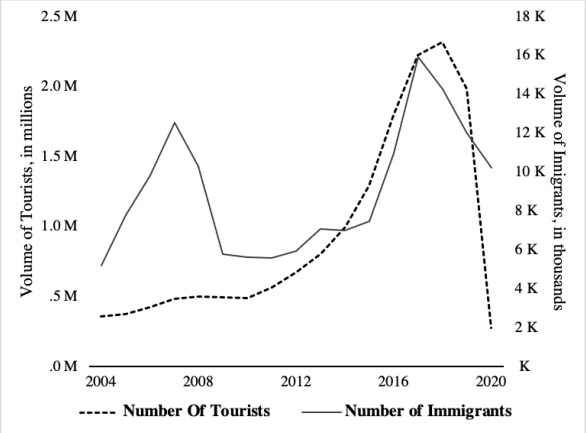

Figure 1: *Volume of International visitors (through Keflavik airport) and volume of Immigrants, Iceland 2004-2020 (Statistics Iceland, 2020; Icelandic Tourist Board, 2020).*

A Review of Literature

Immigration in the Nordic Region

The Nordic region of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden plus the autonomies territories of Greenland, the Faroe Islands, and the Aland Islands are constantly upheld as among the best places to live. They top global ranking after global ranking, headlining listicles as the most peaceful, the most gender-equal, the safest, and the happiest (Martela, Greve, Rothstein, & Saari, 2020). The "Nordic Fantasy" is in fact a major selling point all throughout Democratic Sen. Bernie Sander's presidential campaign (although the method in which he sold this "utopia" was riddled with misapprehensions). In recent years, immigration into these countries have hit historic all-time highs. A significant portion of this statistic comes from hail from asylum seekers – people whose home countries lack luxuries such as peace and safety or gender equity (particularly female empowerment). Thus, it should be to no surprise that people, refugees or otherwise, would want to flock to the world's northernmost countries, despite its wildly different mental and physical climates. This is further sinewed by the 2018 World Happiness Report, where all five Nordic countries are ranked in the top ten as the countries where foreign-born people are happiest (Helliwell, Huang, Wang, & Shiplett, 2018).

In 1954, the Nordic countries officially ratified a free labor mobility agreement (Pedersen, Roed, & Wadensjo, 2008). This allowed for an exemption of Nordic nationals from being required a passport or resident permit while in a country other than their own. This mobility has since proliferated. In 1994, majority of the Nordic countries were ushered into the open European labor market after the region voted for EU membership. Norway and Iceland were not included in this expansion and to this day are still not members of the EU, but are included in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). These mandates have since allowed residencies for EU/EEA citizens born outside of the region (NDI, 2013). Labor migration soared once again in 2004, when the EU enacted its largest expansion yet, welcoming the Eastern bloc countries into the fold. Laborers and immigrants fleeing from war or persecution has largely dictated the state of immigration in Norden for the better part of the century.

Nordic Otherness

Through the growth of the foreign-born communities in the Nordic region, its reputation steadily rose to that of a progressive and open utopia (Zeisset, 2016). Studies have indicated that Nordics are generally positive in its sentiment towards immigrants (Bohman, 2018). However, in recent years, the surge in immigration largely due to refugees fleeing from war or persecution has strained this impression. A growing intolerance towards immigrants, especially towards Muslims and other asylum seekers has emerged (Zeisset, 2016). The major inflows of asylum seekers have created a "refugee crisis", which has prompted many of the countries towards more restrictive immigration laws and asylum benefits to temper their famed "desirability as destinations" (Tanner, 2016). Unluckily for foreign-born residents in these countries, this intolerance also came with a rise in popularity of nativist attitudes, violent crimes towards immigrants, and right-wing parties (Zeisset, 2016; Bohman, 2018). A number of determinants have been suggested to explain this increasing xenophobia, including: religiosity, economic concern, a sense of threat, nationalism, and political interests (Zeisset, 2016; Bohman, 2018). Studies conducted over the subject, however, have found that the primary antecedent for anti-immigration sentiment in the Nordic region is a sense of threat to their cultures and lifestyles (Zeisset, 2016; Markaki &

Longhi, 2013; Sides & Citrin, 2007). What mattered most to participants in these studies was that Nordic cultural beliefs and homogeneity should be upheld (Sides & Citrin, 2007). This isn't to say that immigrants should surrender their traditions, practices, and values, but rather that they should adopt Nordic conventions as they assimilate into Nordic society. However, this endorsed significance towards "keeping the culture" is somewhat divided in Icelandic society.

Generally, immigrant studies in Iceland convey that Icelandic natives hold a neutral to positive sentiment towards immigrants (Murdock, 2020; Rafik-Hama, 2020). Overall, they are sympathetic and considerate towards the immigrant population, particularly for immigrant childrn in the school setting (Rafik-Hama, 2020). Murdock (2020) conducted a study that showed the prevalence of "culture contact" in Iceland. In a survey administered to 3,630 native Icelanders, they found that 2/3 of participants have invited immigrants to their homes, and conversely, slightly under the same amount have been invited to immigrants' homes. The study also noted that all in all, immigrants provided a positive impact to the local communities. However, immigrants are expected to adopt Icelandic culture – most especially, the Icelandic language (Murdock, 2020; Skaptadottir & Innes, 2017). In a study by Skaptadottir and Innes (2017), they found that immigrants believed that the Icelandic language was a crucial element in defining not only nationality and citizenship, but also social integration. Immigrants believed that the language was a "boundary marker", expressing a concern that they would never truly belong so long as they did not know the language. From the perspective of native Icelanders, they also gathered divided responses towards foreign-born residents speaking Icelandic. On one hand, some were appreciative of the effort and praised immigrants for their diligence in their path towards becoming an "Icelander"; on the other hand, some natives were more critical, citing the fact that immigrants were notspeaking Icelandic well enough, which could be perceived as a lack of effort on the latter's part. (Skaptadottir & Innes, 2017). Disapproval of their attempts to speak Icelandic could incite anxiety and discouragement in immigrants, demoralizing them from integrating into Icelandic society.

Rise of the Arctic Tourist

The growth of tourism in the Nordic region closely mirrors the growth of its immigrant population in both numbers and sentiment. For these five countries and three territories, whose combined population is just under that of Texas at 27 million people, tourism has been perceived as a welcome success. Because of its high standard of living, the Nordic region is widely considered to be a significant international tourism market (Hall, Muller & Saarinen, 2009) For these countries, tourism has been a means towards growth and development in the economy, welfare, employment, infrastructure, and more (Saarinen, 2010). However, like immigration, this surge in tourism has been a cause of concern for some locals. Oian et.al (2018) posits that this "unprecedented" rise in tourism has resulted in overcrowding and environmental damage. They also suggest that tourism's contribution to the development of infrastructures such as transport and onsite services may pose the same magnitude of problems as its benefits, particularly regarding its sustainability and its long-term effectiveness. The tourism boom in this region has "increased pressure on nature resources and biodiversity, reduced personality safety related to tourism activities…, and conflicts of interests between actors involved in or affected by tourism" (Oian et al, 2018).

This sentiment is also echoed in Icelandic tourism. Most locals are positive towards tourists themselves, but they are more critical in their attitudes towards the tourism industry in both the public and private sector (Huijbens & Bjarnadottir, 2015; Helgadottir et.al, 2019).

Sustainability is cited as a major concern, with natives believing that the tourism industry is more preoccupied with turning a quick profit – which only grows higher at the cost of quality developments (Oian et al, 2018; Helgadottir et al, 2019). Overall, negative perceptions towards tourists have remained low across the Icelandic Tourism Research Centre's studies throughout the years and geared towards apprehension for the environment and sustainability (Huijbens & Bjarnadottir, 2015; Bjarnadottir, Arnalds, & Vikingsdottir, 2018; Bjarnadottir, 2020). Icelandic residents view tourism as crucial to their economy and creates opportunities for individuals, companies, and municipalities. However, they also believed that jobs in the tourist industry were "monotonous and poorly compensated", maintaining their reproach towards the industry itself rather than individual tourists (Bjarnadottir, Arnalds, & Vikingsdottir, 2018; Bjarnadottir, 2020).

Statement of Purpose

What this research aims to discern is whether immigration sentiment is in any way correlated to number of tourist visits in Iceland - that is, whether native Icelandic residents view immigrants in a more positive light as more tourists visit the country**.** The key variables in this study will be immigrant sentiment and tourist volume in Iceland in the years 2004, 2012, 2016, 2015. For immigrant sentiment, I will explore the following opinions: 1) the extent to which Iceland should allow: a) immigrants of the same race or ethnic group to come and live in the country, b) immigrants of a different race or ethnic group, c) immigrants from poorer countries outside of Europe; 2) the extent to which immigration is bad or good for the Iceland's economy, 3) the extent to which Iceland's culture life is undermined or enriched by immigrants, and 4) the extent to which immigrants make Iceland a worse or better place to live.

Hypothesis

Taking everything into consideration, my primary hypothesis predicts a positive correlation between the rise in tourist numbers and immigrant sentiment in Iceland. This implies that the tourist boom, which exposes Iceland to foreign attitudes, cultures, and lifestyles, will push residents to be more open-minded towards these foreign attributes; in turn this growth in perspective is concomitant with a more favorable native opinion towards immigrants in Iceland. To link these two topics, I will explore developments in practice, policy, and infrastructure as a result of both immigrant growth and tourist growth, as well as sentiment towards tourists in and how it compares to sentiment towards immigrants. Additionally, sentiment will be further explored by delving into Icelandic attitudes towards their lives and the country, their human values, and their well-being. Findings will be used to contribute to research towards improving policy and programs in the tourism industry and the immigration ministry in smaller countries with more homogeneous native populations.

Methods and Methodology

Data

Tourist volume was collected through the Icelandic Tourist Board's (ITB) periodical brochure, "Tourism in Iceland in Figures". The tourist numbers this study focuses on are based on the volume of international visitors arriving through Keflavik Airport, which serves as Iceland's main hub for international transportation. According to the ITB, tourist volume for 2004 was $n =$

360,400, which grew to *n= 672,900* in 2012. This number more than doubled in 2016, with Keflavik Airport having recorded *n = 1,792,200* visitors. In turn, this number rose around 23% in 2018, which saw *n = 2,315,925* international visitors. Overall, as of 2018, tourist numbers have shot up 85% since 2004.

The rest of the variables presented in this study, including immigration sentiment, were gathered from the European Social Survey (ESS), a cross-national survey that has been administered in Europe nine times since 2001, the latest round being conducted in 2018. The survey has historically been conducted through face-to-face interviews with cross-sectional samples, evaluating participants' attitudes, beliefs, and behavioral patterns. Not every country participates in the ESS every time it is conducted; in this instance, Iceland has only participated in the survey four times: in 2004, 2012, 2016, and 2018 (rounds 2, 6, 8, and 9 respectively).

ESS sampling is random and representative of all persons over 14 years old who reside private households in each country, irrespective of ethnicity, citizenship, or language. Four weighting variables are also evaluated: design, post-stratification, population, and analysis weights. Design weights account for differences in sampling designs across the countries, where some regions may be more likely to be randomly selected than others, design weights are evaluated using the inverse of the probabilities of each participant to be selected. These numbers are then scaled together to equal the study's net sample size and to equate the mean to one. Second, post-stratification weights aim to reduce the sampling error and any possible non-response bias using factors such as age group, gender, education, and region. This is achieved by adjusting the design weights so that they mirror the population distribution of the age, gender, and education and the marginal distribution for region. The third weighting variable is the population size. These weights reduce bias and overrepresentation, accounting for *different population* sizes but *similar sample* sizes among participating countries. Lastly, analysis weights accounts for differential selection probabilities for each countries and is obtained by deriving design weights and applying post-stratification and population size adjustments.

Measurement quality assessment are also performed across all ESS rounds. This is partially determined by the *Multitrait-Multimethod* approach (MTMM*)*, where participants answer three survey questions that measure different interests or traits twice using different response scales or methods for each time the questions are posed. Along with method effects, this approach infers the questions' reliability and validity, both of which dictate measurement quality.

Finally, the ESS requires a sample size of 800 to 1,500 in countries with less than 2 million people. For Iceland, the sample sizes are as follows: *n=579* for round 2*,* *n=752* for round 6, *n=880* for round 8, and finally, *n=861* for round 9.

Variables

Immigration sentiment was measured using two primary variables, modeled from six sub-variables from the ESS. The first variable, ***immigrant category***, gauges the extent to which the respondent will allow three types of immigrants: immigrants of the same race or ethnicity as the majority of the people in Iceland (*imsmetn*), immigrants that are of a different race or ethnicity from the majority (*imdfetn*), and immigrants from poorer countries outside of Europe (*impcntr*). This category was measured using a Likert scale of 1 to 4, with 1 indicating that the respondent is in favor of allowing many immigrants to live in the country and 4 indicating that the respondent is in the belief that none should be allowed at all. The second variable, **immigrant impact**, assesses how the respondents feel towards immigrants in regards to their impact on the

country, particularly in three areas: whether immigration is good or bad for the country's economy (*imbgeco*), whether immigrants have enriched or undermined the country's cultural life (*imueclt*), and whether immigrants have made the country a better or worse place to live (*imwbcnt*). This category was also measured using a Likert scale of 0 to 10, with 0 representing the belief that immigration has had a negative effect on the country and 10 indicating a positive effect.

Other variables were also studied for further analyses of immigration sentiment in Iceland. Variables on satisfaction and human values were applied. The satisfaction variables concern the extent to which respondents were happy (*happy*), satisfied with the national government (*stfgov*), the present state of economy (*stfeco*), and life as a whole (*stflife*). Second, human values were surveyed based on how important the respondent believes it is for 1) people to be treated equally and have equal opportunities (*ipeqopt*), 2) to understand different people (*ipudrst*), and 3) to follow traditions and customs (*imptrad*). All variables were measured using a Likert scale.

Findings

Demographics

Omitting non-responses, gender was more or less evenly split in all rounds of the ESS in Iceland. The age average for all rounds ranged from. 43 to 49, with the second round having the youngest mean age and the ninth round having the oldest. Education at the tertiary (Bachelor's degree) and post-secondary non-tertiary levels (Associate's and vocational programs) increased with each round of the ESS. The second, sixth, and eighth rounds had a higher proportion of respondents whose education were at the upper secondary level (High School diploma) or less. On the other hand, the ninth round from 2018 comprised of slightly more respondents who were at the post-secondary to tertiary levels (52.5%). Around 98% of participants in each round were citizens of Iceland. Lastly, most respondents were non-minorities across all four rounds, with the sixth round having the highest proportion of minority respondents at 3.5%.

Table 1: *Demographics of survey samples for Iceland, rounds 2, 6, 8, and 9 (ESS)*

	2004 *(n=579)*	2012 *(n=752)*	2016 *(n=880)*	2018 *(n=861)*
Gender				
Males	271	377	434	421
Females	299	375	440	440
Age				
M ± SD	43.9 ± 17.3	43.6 ± 18.3	48.5 ± 18.0	49.7 ± 18.1
Education Level				
Tertiary	170	249	338	372
Post secondary non tertiary		47	73	80
Upper secondary and less	336	454	460	509
Citizenship				
Citizen	570	737	862	840
Non-citizen	1	11	17	21
Ethnicity				
Minority	13	26	21	28

Non-minority	556	703	851	823

Results

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The six immigration variables from the ESS were factor analyzed using principal component analysis with *varimax* (orthogonal) rotation to comprise two factors that will serve as our final dependent variables. The model indicated that our first factor comprises of our immigrant category, which yielded high loadings for the variables (*imsmetn*, *immdfetn*, and *impcntr*) and captured about 35% of the variance. The second factor comprised of the variables for our immigrant impact category, which yielded lower loadings and captured around 20%. Together, these variables captured 55% of the variance with factor loadings ranging from 0.580 to 0.928 (Table 2).

The communalities of the variables for immigrant category were overall relatively high, with the variable *imdfetn* having the highest communality at 0.869. On the other hand, the communalities for immigrant impact were much lower, ranging from 0.347 to 0.499. This demonstrates that these variables have smaller amounts of variance in common with other variables in the analysis (Table 2).

Table 2: *EFA results, Factor loadings and commonalities based on a principal components analysis with varimax rotation for 6 items from the ESS Rounds 2, 6, 8, and 9 (N=3,072)*

	Immigrant category	Immigrant impact	Communality
Allow immigrants of the same race or ethnicity as majority (*imsmetn*).	0.713	0.157	0.535
Allow immigrants of a different race or ethnicity as majority (*imdfetn*)	0.928		0.869
Allow immigrants from poorer countries outside of Europe (*impcntr*).	0.844	0.104	0.723
Immigrants are good for the economy (*imbgeco*).		0.580	0.347
Immigrants enrich the country's cultural life (*imueclt*).	0.108	0.582	0.351
Immigrants make the country a better place (imwbcnt).	0.115	0.697	0.499

Ordinary Least Squares

Using the EFA model, interval factor scores were estimated based on the data matrix and the Thurstone method, which finds regression based weights. This allowed for an ordinal logistic regression to be performed (Tables 3 & 4). Results indicated a positive trend between the two immigrant variables and the number of tourists throughout the ESS rounds. The model yielded significant associations between immigrant sentiment for ESS rounds 6 and 9, which were respectively held in 2012, when there were 673 thousand tourists, and 2018, when there were 2.3 million tourists ($p > 0.05$). Coefficients for immigrant category were higher than those of immigration impact, stipulating that Icelandic residents were more likely to allow immigrants of any race and origin with increasing tourist numbers. Likewise, results also showed that increasing tourist numbers gives more probability to Icelandic residents believing that immigrants improve the country and its economy and culture. In brief, results indicate that overall, an increase in value of tourist numbers increases immigrant sentiment (Tables 3 & 4).

Table 3: *OLS model coefficients for immigrant category and tourists numbers by year, ESS rounds 2, 6, 8, and 9 (N=3,072)*

	Estimate	SE	P-value
Intercept	-0.17	0.04	1.01e-05***
2012 (673K)	0.28	0.05	5.93e-08***
2016 (1.8M)	0.09	0.05	0.0717
2018 (2.3M)	0.26	0.05	4.48e-07***

Table 4: *OLS model outcomes for immigration impact and tourists numbers by year, ESS rounds 2, 6, 8, and 9 (N=3,072)*

	Estimate	SE	P-value
Intercept	-0.09	0.03	0.00968**
2012 (673K)	0.13	0.04	0.00245**
2016 (1.8M)	1.7E-04	0.044	0.99694
2018 (2.3M)	0.17	0.04	5.57e-05 ***

Chronbach's Alpha

Additionally, a test for the Chronbach's Alpha indicates that the two variables, immigrant category and immigration impact, have a raw alpha of around $\alpha = 0.73$, which suggests acceptable internal consistency in the survey (Taber, 2018; Cortina, 1993). Thus, the six total sub-variables for our two main variables reliably predict a common underlying concept, which in this case refers to immigrant sentiment.

Controls

As mentioned, variables denoting life satisfaction and some of the respondents' human values were tested for further analysis on immigrant sentiment. Performing a regression analysis including these variables indicated significant and stronger associations for ESS rounds 8 and 9, held in 2016 where 1.8 million tourists visited Iceland, and 2018, with 2.3 million visitors, respectively. This demonstrates that tourist numbers are not the sole basis for the rise in immigrant sentiment in the country. In particular, happiness, life satisfaction, and the belief that people should be treated equally yielded significant coefficients, implying that immigrant sentiment is boosted with the rise of these three characteristics (Tables 5 & 6).

Table 5: *Regression outcomes for immigrant category with satisfaction and human values*

	Estimate	SE	P-value
2012 (673K)	0.06	0.05	0.26692
2016 (1.8M)	0.22	0.05	1.43e-05 ***
2018 (2.3M)	0.23	0.05	8.01e-6 ***
Happiness	0.14	0.04	0.00194**
Life satisfaction	2.21	0.27	5.84e-16 ***
Satisfaction with economy	-0.07	0.13	0.58782
Satisfaction with government	-0.04	0.08	0.52185
Important that -			
People should be treated equally	0.51	0.23	0.02854 *
[We] should understand different people	-0.01	0.24	0.96310
People follow tradition and customs	-0.22	0.18	0.21777

Table 6: *Regression outcomes for immigration impact with satisfaction and human values* *All NAs are excluded.*

	Estimate	SE	P-value
2012 (673K)	0.06	0.05	0.26692
2016 (1.8M)	0.22	0.05	1.43e-05 ***
2018 (2.3M)	0.22	0.05	8.01e-06***
Happiness	0.14	0.04	0.00194**
Life satisfaction	2.21	0.27	5.84e-16***
Satisfaction with economy	-0.07	0.13	0.58782
Satisfaction with government	-0.04	0.98	0.62185
Important that -			
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People follow tradition and customs	-0.22	0.18	0.21777

All NAs are excluded.

Discussion

Notwithstanding the fact that tourism and immigration are two of the most significant indicators of globalization and have increased in numbers together, it is important to note that there is little research into the association between both in general. Thus, discourse on the tourism's association with the more concentrated issue of immigrant sentiment and attitudes are even fewer especially for a small and isolated country such as Iceland. Studies on immigrant sentiment are in more likely to be in the context of broader variables such as religion, national pride, educational attainment, socioeconomic status, and so on; it is for this reason that this paper included the satisfaction and human values variables. A study by Korol and Bevelander (2021) posited that life satisfaction in young adults foster increased tolerance towards immigrants through its positive associations with political satisfaction and social trust. This agrees with our regression outcomes for life satisfaction and immigrant sentiment. Additionally, this association is reciprocal. Other studies have noted that attitudes towards immigrants can be an indicator of life satisfaction and happiness. A generational study on the matter by Bazan-Monasterio, Lacruz, and Lacruz (2021) also using the ESS indicated that respondents who were more hostile or harbored more negative attitudes towards immigrants were more likely to be less satisfied with their life. The same study also suggests that income and educational attainment play a role in immigrant sentiment.

That being said, significant results are in line with current trends regarding immigration and tourism in Iceland. Gallup's most recent Migrant Acceptance Index, which was founded as a result of the European refugee crisis that occurred in the mid-2010s due to, lists Iceland as the second most-accepting country for migrants, just behind Canada (Esipova, Ray, & Pugliese, 2021). This high volume of immigrants relocating to Iceland has posed few contentions to the country's policy and private sectors (Haraldsson, 2016). Factors such as education for immigrant children and social integration of unemployed immigrants are to be accounted as per the Icelandic government's integration action plan, which aims to ensure equal opportunities for everyone residing in Iceland, regardless of origin (Haraldsson, 2016). Similarly, the rise in tourism has called for developments in policy in both industry and government as a response to concerns such as crowding, tourist satisfaction, and the preservation of Iceland's assets (Johanneson, 2015; Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, & Wendt, 2020). This evident breadth of concern for immigration and tourism imply a desire to improve conditions for these two growing aspects of the country. These progressive attitudes towards both may partially lie in their impacts to Icelandic economy and culture. Limited studies on Iceland's multiculturalism have shown that Icelandic residents held lesser perceived threat of immigrants and were associated with greater knowledge of immigrants' culture and increased drive to work with immigrants (Hermannsdóttir, Ægisdóttir, & Gerstein, 2021). Interestingly, this study also revealed that increased multicultural awareness and more positive sentiment were associated with greater perceived threats to economy and security, which draws a parallel to our negative but non-significant coefficients for economic and government satisfaction (-0.07 and -0.04, respectively).

As mentioned, tourism is critical to Iceland's economy, having comprised almost 40% of their total export revenue and 15.7% of the workforce in 2018 (OECD, 2020). In fact, Iceland's tourism industry was crucial in helping the country recover from the 2008 financial crisis (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, & Wendt, 2020). In the wake of COVID-19, these impacts from tourism may

be replicated in the road to economic recovery. In the same vein, a study conducted by Ortiz, Grimée, and Prichard (2015) on unemployment in Norway, Iceland, and other EU member states attested that increases in immigration in a country decreases unemployment, at least in the short-term. Furthermore, it should be noted that the populations of Nordic countries are ageing; Heleniak (2018) proposed that increased immigration and a rise in "newcomers" will regulate and maintain economic growth. Having this in mind, a push towards strengthening the tourism industry and immigrant assimilation into Icelandic society can help direct the economy upwards. For immigration, this may include more accessibility to language-learning resources or increased opportunities in vocational education for unemployed immigrants past the school age. For tourism, especially post-COVID-19, the industry can implement policies that improve traveler confidence such as increased safety measures or availability of healthcare for foreign visitors.

Appendix

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Immigrants make the country a better place (imwbcnt).	0.115	0.697	0.499

Table 1. Proportion of participants per year on how many immigrants they would allow into the country.

Year	N *(NA omitted)*	Allow Many	Allow Some	Allow a Few	Allow None
Immigrants of the same race/ethnic group					
2004	567	47.27%	42.50%	9.17 %	1.05 %
2012	732	56.42%	37.16%	5.87%	0.55%
2016	863	56.67%	38.93%	4.29%	0.12%
2018	844	61.73%	34.72%	3.32%	0.24%
Immigrants of different race/ethnic group					
2004	564	28.72%	37.77%	25.00%	8.51%
2012	725	34.12%	40.50%	20.80%	4.58%
2016	859	40.05%	39.35%	18.28%	2.33%
2018	836	43.67%	37.80%	16.27%	2.27%
Immigrants from poorer countries outside of Europe					
2004	557	30.16%	38.02%	24.42%	7.36%
2012	715	34.03%	41.47%	20.87%	3.36%

2016	853	41.47%	40.21%	16.88%	1.64%
2018	827	42.32%	40.63%	15.36%	1.69%

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