Cultural Engagement and Immigration Attitudes

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This document reports the experimental protocol for the study "Cultural Engagement and Immigration Attitudes".

The Experiment

Experimental design

The experiment will be divided into two phases: the guided tours of the Santa Maria della Scala museum split into control and treatment visits, and a post-visit survey assessing changes in subjects' generosity and attitudes toward migration. We will recruit University of Siena students through HROOT. All students from the University of Siena who signed up for the HROOT recruitment software will be invited to participate in the guided tours to the Santa Maria della Scala museum. To incentivize students to take part in the visit, all subjects that show up at the museum 15 minutes before the start of the visit will be given a 20€ show-up fee. In total, we aim to recruit no less than 164 Italian students. Each will be randomly assigned to an activity in the museum.

Activities in the museum. The field experiment will proceed with a structured visit to the Santa Maria della Scala museum in Siena. This phase constitutes the main component of our study, designed to assess how cultural experiences influence attitudes toward hospitality and immigration. Students will be randomly allocated to one of three activities.

Non focused museum visit (Control). For the non focused museum visit, students will visit the exposition regarding Fonte Gaia in the underground floor of the museum.

Focused museum visit (Treatment). The focused museum visit consists of a tour of the pilgrimage section of the museum. This tour is designed to subtly highlight themes of pilgrimage and historical migration. Operators will focus on the previous role of the museum as a hospital, thus focusing on the hospitality and assistance provided to people in help.

Importantly, the tours will be performed by employees of the museum who are professional guides. They prepared the itinerary for both visits and have been instructed to be neutral in the exposition during the tours. It is key that the connection between the themes of the visit in the treated group and immigration arise naturally in the minds of the students without nudging from the guide.

Measures of prosociality and hospitality Conditional on showing for the visit, students will be granted a 20€ show-up fee. We will measure students' generosity and attitudes toward migration through this last questionnaire. We will measure subjects' generosity through a simple incentivized measure, namely, how much of the show-up fee they donate to NGOs. Moreover, we will measure subjects' attitudes toward migrants through incentivized and self-reported measures.

Donations. We will ask subjects whether they want to donate to two types of NGOs: one operating in the field of migration and another one operating in an unrelated field. Specifically,

1. We selected ICR (the Italian Council for Refugees) as the migration NGO;

2. We selected ILBP (Italian League for Birds Protection) as the generic NGO.

Self-reported attitudes towards migration. Subsequently, subjects will answer six questions from Section B of the European Social Survey (ESS) Round 7. Specifically, questions B29 to B34. Such questions cover topics regarding attitudes and beliefs toward migration.

As pointed out by Broockman et al. (2017) and applied by Bursztyn et al. (2017) and Andries et al. (2024), indexes rather than single indicators (of attitudes toward migration) might increase the precision of the measure by reducing the survey's measurement error. We plan to build an index on attitudes towards migration including donations to ICR and self-reported attitudes towards migration.

Experimental Hypothesis

Our main goal is to show that focused cultural visits can improve attitudes towards migration. Such an outcome can be recorded in different ways. We will measure it using a mix of

incentivized and self-reported measures.

Firstly, we will consider the average of the individual donations to both NGOs. This variable is meant to measure prosociality in general.

Hypothesis 1 (H1). Average total donations are larger under the treatment than the control.

We expect subjects exposed to focused museum to donate more than those exposed to generic museum since only subjects exposed to focused museum will subtly think about hospitality and generosity during the visit. The second variable we consider is the average individual donations to ICR. This variable will measure specific generosity towards refugees— i.e., a specific form of attitudes towards migration.

Hypothesis 2 (H2). Average donations to ICR are larger under the treatment than the control.

According to $H2$, we also expect that subjects exposed to focused cultural visits donate more to an NGO operating in a field touched (at least indirectly) by such a visit. Specifically, we expect the effect implied by $H1$ to be largely driven by the one implied by $H2$. Indeed, the underlying topic of the focused visit reflects themes such as hospitality or generosity towards those in need and ICR is the NGO that most embeds those values. According to $H2$, we also expect a similar result in the self-reported measures of attitudes towards migration.

Hypothesis 3 (H3). Average self-reported measures of attitudes toward migration are better under the treatment than the control.

As we pointed out earlier, we also plan to build indexes on attitudes towards migration. In line with previous work (see again Broockman et al., 2017; Andries et al., 2024), we plan to build a main index that consists of the standardized sum of each standardized variable (meaning donations to ICR and the answers to the ESS). Coherently with $H2$ and $H3$, we also expect such index to be bigger under the treatment than under the control.

Hypothesis 4 (H4). The average index on attitudes towards migrants is larger under the treatment than the control.

Analysis plan We plan to conduct our analysis by comparing the two average donations, self-reported measures, and the index through a T-test. Similarly, we will assess the robustness of the T-test findings through regression analysis where the average total donations, the average donations to ICR, and the average of the self-reported measures of attitudes towards migration will be the dependent variables, and a dummy indicating treatment will be the main independent one. If available, we also plan to use answers from a survey of the

University of Siena as covariates. Such a survey contains questions from the World Value Survey, the Moral Foundations survey, and the Big 5 Personality Traits survey. Importantly, this survey is conducted independently from our experiment, and thus, answers may not be available for every participants.

Sample size. We expect that the size of our treatment will lie in the boundaries of low-medium effect size; thus, we expect an effect close to 0.3. Such number is not far from the effect size found by Andries et al. (2024), i.e., what we consider to be the closest experiment to ours from the literature. To obtain an effect size of 0.3 with a T-test with $\alpha = 0.05$ and $\beta = 0.8$, one needs a minimum of 82 subjects per treatment, leaving a minimum of 164 subjects to detect an effect.

References

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