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Immigrant Rights Expansion and Local Integration: Evidence from Italy

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Abstract

We study how expanding immigrants' rights affects their political and social integration by leveraging Romania's 2007 EU accession, which granted Romanian immigrants in Italy municipal voting and residency rights. Using municipality-level event studies, we find: (1) Enfranchisement increased the election of Romanian-born councilors — especially in competitive races — despite limited changes in candidacy rates. It also increased Romanian turnout, suggesting that electoral gains stem from an expanded voter base. An instrumented difference-in-differences analysis shows this is driven by pre-existing Romanian residents, not new arrivals. (2) Consent to organ donation rose among Romanians post-2007, indicating that the expansion of rights extends to prosocial behavior. (3) Nonetheless, immigrant presence continues to raise support for right-leaning parties and security spending while reducing social spending, highlighting persistent native backlash that outweighs immigrant political influence.

1 Introduction

With a world population of migrants approaching 300 million (World Migration Report 2024), immigration is increasingly at the forefront of political debates in advanced economies.

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Scholars have argued for decades that free mobility of labor brings economic benefits (Hamilton and Whalley 1984; Clemens 2011; Kennan 2013; Foged et al. 2022). However, in many countries, these economic benefits have often been accompanied by negative social outcomes such as social segregation and marginalization of migrants (Bauder 2006), as well as political backlash and polarization (Barone et al. 2016; Becker and Fetzer 2016; Halla et al. 2017; Viskanic 2017; Barrera et al. 2020; Tabellini 2020; Koukal et al. 2021; Mayda et al. 2022). It is therefore essential to understand what measures governments can implement to mitigate the potential negative effects while maximizing the benefits of labor mobility.

Naturalization is often considered a process that fosters integration by expanding immigrants' rights (Bevelander and Pendakur 2011; Gathmann and Keller 2017; Hainmueller et al. 2017; Gathmann and Garbers 2023). However, in practice, it is a difficult solution in the short run. First, the process is lengthy, with most countries requiring five to ten years of residency just to be eligible for naturalization. Second, naturalization reform is a politically divisive topic, hindering efforts to accelerate it. Finally, it can be costly for immigrants, sometimes requiring renunciation of original citizenship or affecting cultural identity, which may have negative consequences (Dahl et al. 2022).

Many countries around the world have adopted milder forms of expanding migrant rights. For instance, in some places foreign residents can vote in local or even national elections. In the UK, Commonwealth citizens can vote in general elections and run for most political offices.[1] Legalization programs for undocumented migrants are another example. The 1986 U.S. Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) granted permanent legal status to 2.8 million people (Casarico et al. 2018). More recently, EU enlargement has expanded rights for migrants. By gaining EU citizenship, nationals of new EU member states who live in another member country gain the right to reside without a visa, as well as the right to vote and stand in local elections.

This paper exploits Romania's accession to the European Union in 2007 to study how the resulting expansion of political and residency rights for Romanians in Italy affected their local political representation and prosocial behavior. It also investigates how these changes influenced the ideology of elected municipal officials and public finance more broadly. Following Romania's accession to the European Union, Romanians——who constitute the largest immigrant community in Italy——gained the right to vote and stand in municipal elections, as well as enhanced residency rights. We implement an event-study analysis around 2007 to estimate the effects of this expansion of rights. To isolate these effects from broader trends relating to immigrants, we conduct placebo tests for Albanian and Moroccan immigrants,

[1] On the effects of immigrant enfranchisement on outcomes beyond integration, see Bhatiya (2025), Razin and Sadka (2017), Engdahl et al. (2020), and Ferwerda (2021).

the next largest immigrant groups in Italy who are not enfranchised.

Our first set of results shows an increase in Romanian representation after 2007 in Italian municipalities with large Romanian populations. A municipality with one additional percentage point in the Romanian population share in 2003 is 0.497 percentage points more likely to elect a Romanian-born councilor. We find no corresponding increase in representation among Albanians or Moroccans, suggesting that the results are not driven by general immigrant-related trends.

Additional findings point to an increase in demand for Romanian representation, rather than simply an increase in candidate supply, as the main driver of the results. First, we examine the supply of foreign-born candidates (both elected and non-elected) after 2007. While the number of Romanian-born candidates increased, we also observe a virtually identical increase among Albanian candidates, indicating that supply alone cannot explain the differential success of Romanian representation. Second, we find evidence that Romanian citizens actively exercised their newly acquired voting rights, suggesting that ethnic voting may have played a role. Third, a triple-difference analysis reveals that municipalities facing competitive elections were more likely to elect Romanian-born councilors. This suggests that political parties may have strategically included minority candidates to attract votes from newly enfranchised Romanian voters.

Our second result is that the effect of obtaining EU citizenship extends beyond political participation to prosocial behavior. Specifically, we observe an increase in consent to organ donation among Romanian immigrants in Italy following Romania's accession to the EU in 2007. In the first five years, the number of consents per municipality increases steadily, rising on average by 0.003 consents per year relative to 2006, after controlling for the municipal Romanian population. Although small in absolute terms, this corresponds to about 140% of the average Romanian consents per municipality in 2006, reflecting the rarity of consents. In the following five years, the effect stabilizes at a higher level, averaging 0.009 additional consents per year, equivalent to 398% of the 2006 average. We hypothesize that this reflects an increased sense of belonging and a stronger commitment to the host community. The residency rights conferred by EU citizenship likely raised expectations of long-term settlement, while the expansion of political rights provided greater opportunities for civic engagement. We do not observe a similar trend among Albanian or Moroccan immigrants, suggesting that the observed increase among Romanians was driven by the acquisition of EU citizenship.

These findings raise the question of whether the observed effects are attributable to long-term Romanian residents or more recent arrivals. We complement the event-study analyses on political representation and prosocial behavior with an instrumental variables approach. Specifically, we instrument for the share of newly arrived Romanians using a combination of

cross-sectoral demand for foreign labor in Italy and Romanian outflows to non-Italian destinations. We find that the effects on both political representation and prosocial behavior are driven by Romanians who migrated to Italy prior to accession, indicating that the expansion of rights facilitated the integration of long-term residents.

In light of the increase in representation and changes in the electorate following enfranchisement, we examine whether the political orientation of winning parties shifts to reflect the preferences of newly enfranchised voters. In particular, right-leaning parties in Italy have either advocated for anti-immigrant policies themselves or have been in a coalition with parties that did, during our observation period. However, we find an overall increase in support for right-wing parties in municipalities with higher immigrant populations. This pattern holds both in municipalities with larger Romanian populations and in those with other immigrant groups. Because the effect on the winning party is unchanged whether or not the relevant migrant group has voting rights, we conclude that immigration shifts the winner's political orientation to the right, while voting rights per se have no significant effect. This finding aligns with Barone et al. (2016), who show increased support for the center-right coalition in both national and mayoral elections in response to immigration.

Finally, since local public finances are managed by municipal governments, we examine whether local expenditure patterns change as Romanian immigrants obtain stronger political rights. In particular, we examine whether municipalities increase spending in categories likely to benefit Romanian immigrants in an effort to appeal to new constituents. However, we find that municipalities with a higher immigrant presence show an increase in public security spending and a decrease in social spending as shares of total expenditure. Importantly, we find no statistical difference between municipalities with Romanians and those with non-enfranchised immigrant groups. This suggests that the increase in the likelihood of a right-leaning party winning in municipal elections is driven by the natives' reactions to the presence of immigrants, rather than by parties responding to the preferences of the newly enfranchised group.

Our paper contributes to two strands of literature. First, it contributes to the literature on immigrant integration and legal rights. Prior work shows that legalization of previously undocumented immigrants improves their labor market outcomes (Kossoudji and Cobb-Clark 2002; Lozano and Sorensen 2011; Pan 2012; Steigleder and Sparber 2017), reduces crime (Mastrobuoni and Pinotti 2015; Pinotti 2017), increases tax compliance (Cascio and Lewis 2019) and raises state transfers to immigrant-populated regions (Sabet and Winter 2024). Naturalization also improves social integration (Hainmueller et al. 2017) and labor market outcomes (Gathmann and Keller 2017). Related work has examined the impact of expanding immigrants' rights on their political integration (Engdahl et al. 2020), redistribution through

public finance (Razin and Sadka 2017; Ferwerda 2021), and the behavior of elected officials (Bhatiya 2025). However, to our knowledge, no study has explored the combined impact of expanded voting and residency rights.

We contribute to this literature in three ways. First, we show that enfranchisement has immediate effects on political representation: municipalities with more Romanian citizens are significantly more likely to elect Romanian-born councilors. Second, we find that expanding immigrants' voting and residency rights enhances their prosocial behavior. Third, we identify the mechanism behind the increase in representation, showing that candidate supply alone is insufficient. Instead, it is the combination of increased demand for enfranchised minority politicians and the electoral participation of medium- to long-term resident immigrants that drives greater political representation.

More broadly, our paper relates to the long-standing literature on enfranchisement, particularly studies on women's suffrage and the U.S. Voting Rights Act. Studies find that women's suffrage influenced government size, social and education spending, and political preferences (Lott and Kenny 1999; Abrams and Settle 1999; Washington 2008; Aidt and Dallal 2008; Funk and Gathmann 2015; Cascio and Shenhav 2020; Kose et al. 2020). The Voting Rights Act increased voter turnout and state transfers (Cascio and Washington 2014) and altered policing (Facchini et al. 2020), though it also triggered backlash among white constituents (Bernini et al. 2023). We contribute to this literature by focusing on migrants, who constitute the largest over-age group without voting rights in democratic countries today.

Finally, we contribute to the literature on local politicians by hand-collecting the largest existing dataset of non-elected candidates in Italian municipal elections, a setting frequently studied in this literature.

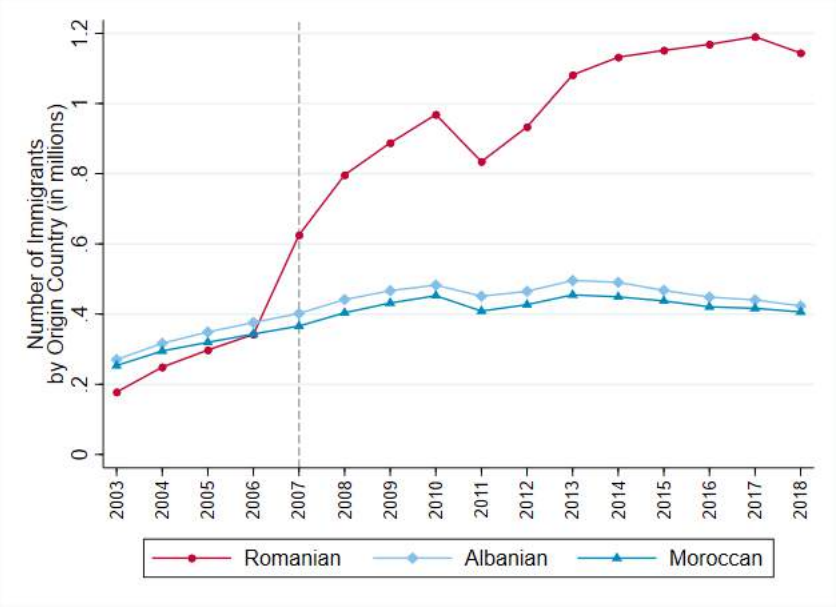
2 Setting

Italy is an ideal setting to study the effects of expanding immigrant rights and integration for several reasons. First, it has a significant foreign population. In 2020, there were over five million foreign citizens, constituting 10.4 percent of the total population in 2019 (OECD 2022). Second, as a member state of the EU, foreign nationals can participate in local elections and legally reside in Italy without a visa, provided they are EU citizens. Third, Italy has around 8,000 municipal governments where EU citizens can vote and run for office, offering fine-grained data and substantial variation. Finally, since these municipal positions are virtually pro bono, they reflect political engagement rather than financial or career incentives.

Since 1990, Italy has consistently experienced net in-migration flows, with migrants ar-

riving mainly from Romania, Albania and Morocco.[2] Italy, together with Spain, is the main destination country for Romanian migrants, hosting 300,000 in 2005 and almost 1.2 million in 2017 (Figure 1). As shown in Figure 2, migrants of all origins tend to concentrate in the northern and central parts of the country, where the majority of manufacturing jobs are located. The regions with the highest number of migrants are the four main northern regions (Lombardy, Piedmont, Emilia-Romagna, and Veneto) and the central regions of Tuscany and Lazio. Romanians in particular are mainly concentrated in Lazio, Lombardy, and Piedmont. Although the general regions of residence are similar across different migrant communities, there is still variation at the municipal level, with some municipalities having more Romanian migrants than other groups, as illustrated in Figure A.1.

Figure 1: Number of Foreign Nationals Living in Italy by Nationality



The figure shows the yearly evolution of the number of foreign nationals in Italy by nationality from 2003 to 2018. (Source: ISTAT)

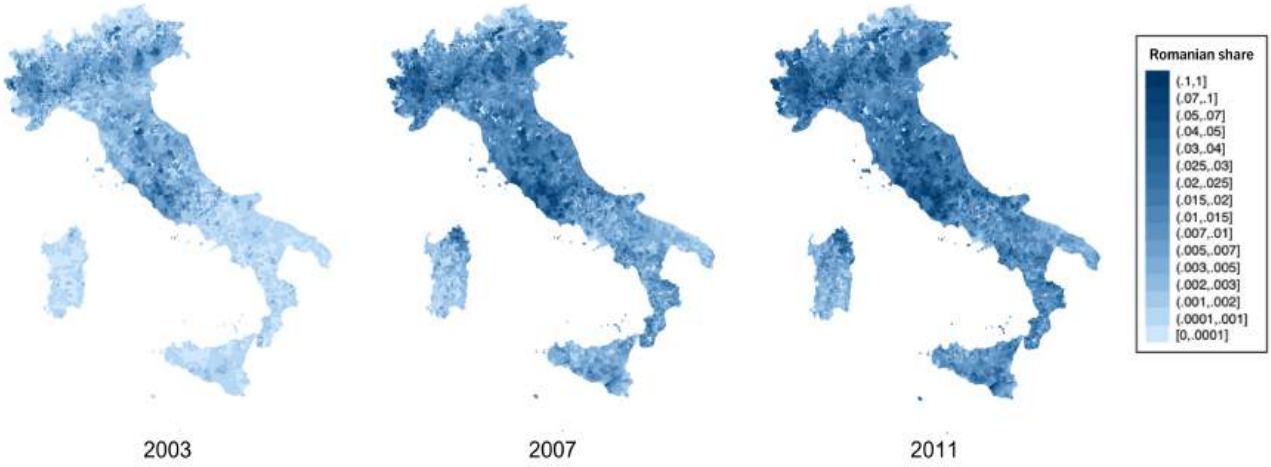
2.1 EU Immigrants' Voting Rights

EU Council Directive 94/80/EC (1994) requires every member state to extend the right to vote in municipal elections—and to run as candidates—to EU citizens residing in a member state of which they are not nationals. Italy adopted the directive in 1996 and enacted a law granting non-Italian EU citizens who reside in Italy access to municipal electoral contests.[3]

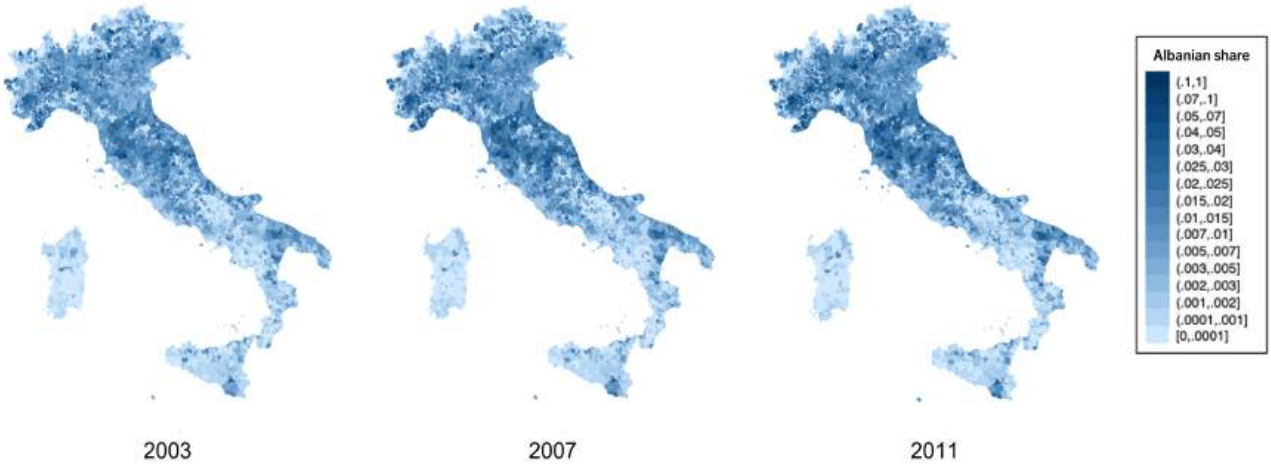
[2]Source: Istituto Cattaneo
[3]Law 1996, n.197

Figure 2: Maps of Immigrant Shares at the Municipality Level

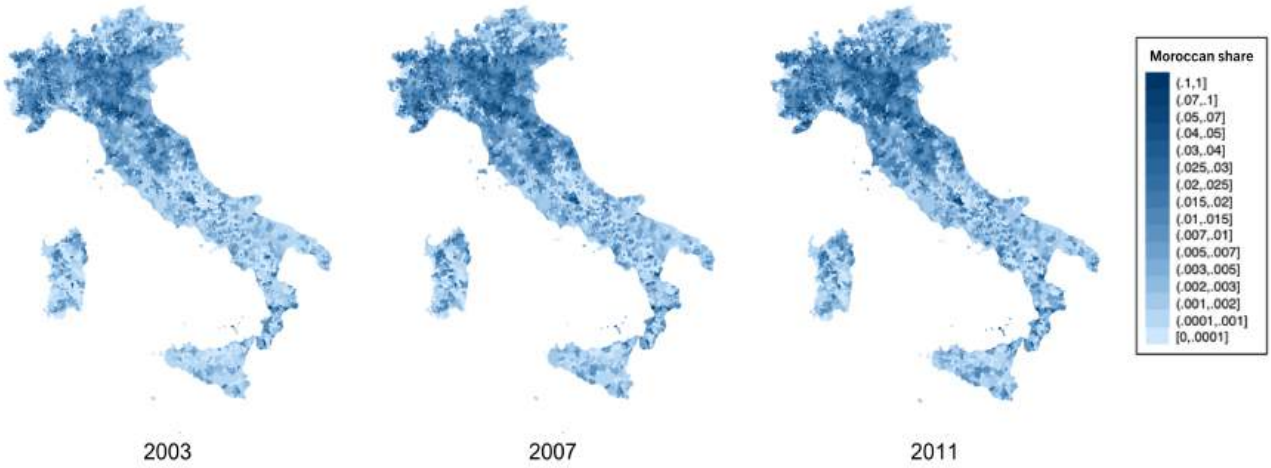
Romanian Share by Municipality and Year



Albanian Share by Municipality and Year



Moroccan Share by Municipality and Year



The law gave non-Italian EU citizens full voting rights in municipal elections, with the sole condition that they register on a special list of non-Italian residents who are eligible to vote in the municipality. Registration is only required for non-Italians voting for the first time in the municipality. The law also regulates the right of non-Italian EU citizens to run as candidates. Upon providing documentation from their home country confirming their eligibility for election, they may run for any municipal office except mayor or vice-mayor.

2.2 Romania's Accession to the EU

EU enlargement has caused the set of nationalities covered by these laws to change over time. When the enfranchisement laws were first introduced, the EU mainly included Western European countries, so only Western Europeans in Italy initially obtained voting rights in municipal elections. As new countries joined, additional immigrant groups gained voting and candidacy rights. The first major expansion occurred in 2004 with the accession of several Eastern European countries, followed by a second in 2007, when Romania and Bulgaria joined.[4][5] This latter expansion was particularly significant for Italy, as it enfranchised a large share of its migrant population.

Becoming EU citizens benefited Romanians in Italy. First, they no longer needed a visa or a residence permit to live and work in Italy, although they still needed to register in an Italian municipality and obtain an Italian fiscal code, as required of all EU citizens. Second, they could participate in local elections, as discussed in Section 2.1. Third, they became eligible for an expedited naturalization process, which reduced the residency requirement from ten to four years (with an additional two to three years of waiting time for approval). However, in Italy, only years of residence accrued after 2007 counted toward this fast-track naturalization, meaning that no Romanian could obtain Italian citizenship through the expedited procedure before 2014.

Joining the EU granted Romanians easier access to the Italian labor market by eliminating the need for visas or residence permits. It also allowed them to take public sector jobs unavailable to non-EU citizens, such as positions in the police force and military. However, full access to the Italian labor market was not immediate for Romanians. Instead, it was introduced gradually, as existing EU member states were permitted to impose temporary restrictions on labor market access during a transitional period. Until 2012, Italy imposed

[4]The first wave of EU enlargement included the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus, and Malta.

[5]Although Bulgaria joined the EU at the same time as Romania, we focus mainly on Romanians, as Bulgarians make up a small fraction of the immigrant population, consistently less than 5% of the number of Romanians in Italy. Robustness checks confirm that including Bulgarians in the analysis does not affect our results.

a quota system and required Romanians to obtain a work permit, limiting the number of new Romanian workers per sector. Exceptions were made for certain sectors——including agriculture, hospitality, construction, and domestic work——as well as for highly qualified professionals, who were not required to obtain a work permit.

We use a survey conducted by the Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (WIIW) on Romanian migrants in Italy to compare the demographic and economic characteristics of migrants who arrived before and after accession. The survey interviewed a thousand individuals in 2011. We use national weights provided by the survey to obtain nationally representative statistics. Table A.1 displays statistics on age, marital status, presence of dependent children, education, income, and voter registration status for those who arrived during 2004–2006 and 2007–2011 respectively. Newly arrived Romanians are significantly more likely to be younger, unmarried, without dependent children, and to have lower levels of education. In addition, they are less likely to be registered to vote.

Table A.2 shows the employment distribution of Romanian migrants by sector before and after 2007. Newly arrived Romanians are 6.14 percentage points more likely to be looking for work, reflecting that migration was no longer tied to employment-based visas. They are also 5 percentage points less likely to work in manufacturing, but 4.1 percentage points more likely to work in construction, which became the most common sector, likely because it was exempt from the quota system. Despite the removal of legal barriers, employment in the public sector does not increase.

2.3 Municipal Governments in Italy

Non-Italian EU citizens residing in Italy can vote in municipal elections. Municipalities constitute the lowest level of government in all of Italy. While the size of a municipality ranges from a few hundred inhabitants to approximately 2.5 million (Rome), the median municipality has just 2,293 residents. Figure A.2 shows the distribution of population distribution across municipalities. Even at the ninetieth percentile, a municipality has only 12,212 residents, highlighting the granularity of the data.

Each municipality functions as a local government and is managed by a mayor and a municipal council. The size of the council increases discontinuously with the municipal population. It ranges from a minimum and median of twelve councilors to a maximum of sixty (respectively, 10 and 48, after 2011). The mayor is directly elected by the municipal population. The candidate whose party or supporting coalition receives the most votes becomes mayor. Two-thirds of the council seats are then allocated to that party or coalition, while

the remaining seats are proportionally distributed among the opposition parties.[6] The constituents also vote for their most preferred councilor and, within each party, the candidates receiving the most votes are elected.[7] Municipal elections in Italy have high turnout rates, generally comparable to those for the general election and consistently exceeding 60 percent from 2000 to 2020, as depicted in Figure A.3.

Municipal councilors typically meet once a month to deliberate and vote on local issues. Earning less than 300 euros per year, they have little financial or career incentive. The latter is especially true for foreigners, who cannot hold higher political office. As a result, the main motivation to run is often a desire to engage with and shape local community life.

3 Data

We combine multiple data sources to construct the dataset for our analysis. The main dataset, from the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), provides information on the number of foreign residents and their citizenship status for approximately 8,000 municipalities, covering 2003 to 2018.[8] The level of analysis is municipality-by-year. Summary statistics for our variables are provided in Table 1.

3.1 Electoral Data

We merge our main dataset with electoral data to study political outcomes, including representation and the political orientation of the winning party. Using the *Anagrafe degli amministratori locali* provided by the Italian Ministry of Interior, we collect information on all municipal officials in office as of December 31 each year from 1986 to 2020. The dataset records office held (e.g., councilor, mayor), municipality of birth, education level, and political party. For representatives born outside Italy, their country of birth is listed instead of a municipality. However, we do not observe their citizenship status.

We augment our dataset by adding information on all municipal and regional electoral returns between 2000 and 2020, as provided by the Italian Ministry of the Interior. In particular, we collect data on the exact election date, the total number of registered voters and the turnout in municipal elections, as well as the number of votes received by each party. Moreover, we use electoral outcomes for regional elections, namely the number of

[6] In cities with more than 15,000 inhabitants a two-round election replaces the simple plurality voting.

[7] When expressing their preference, voters can typically find some information about the councilor candidate on the ballot, including age and place of birth. See Figure A.4 in the Appendix for example.

[8] Because of municipality splits and mergers, the number of municipalities may differ from year to year.

Table 1: Summary Statistics

Variable	Period	#Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Share of Romanian Population	2003	7,861	0.003	0.006	0	0.167
Share of Albanian Population	2003	7,861	0.005	0.008	0	0.126
Share of Moroccan Population	2003	7,861	0.006	0.010	0	0.148
Has Romanian Councilor	1986–2020	273,961	0.002	0.042	0	1
Has Albanian Councilor	1986–2020	273,961	0.001	0.027	0	1
Has Moroccan Councilor	1986–2020	273,961	0.001	0.028	0	1
Romanian Donors per Municipality	2003–2018	128,205	0.009	0.112	0	7
Albanian Donors per Municipality	2003–2018	128,205	0.004	0.071	0	4
Moroccan Donors per Municipality	2003–2018	128,205	0.002	0.045	0	5
Native Donors per Municipality	2003–2018	128,205	2.650	11.884	0	896
Right-Leaning Mayor	2003–2020	138,080	0.095	0.293	0	1
Left-Leaning Mayor	2003–2020	138,080	0.137	0.343	0	1
Centrist Mayor	2003–2020	138,080	0.013	0.113	0	1
Civic Party Mayor	2003–2020	138,080	0.665	0.472	0	1
Five Star Movement Mayor	2003–2020	138,080	0.002	0.049	0	1
Revenue Share: Property Tax	2003–2015	99,839	0.713	0.154	0	1
Revenue Share: Waste Tax	2003–2015	99,839	0.287	0.154	0	1
Expenditure Share: Transportation	2003–2020	122,919	0.137	0.096	0	0.961
Expenditure Share: Social Policies	2003–2020	122,919	0.095	0.080	0	0.903
Expenditure Share: Public Security	2003–2020	122,919	0.031	0.025	0	0.571
Expenditure Share: Public Housing	2003–2020	122,919	0.008	0.036	0	0.905
Expenditure Share: Education	2003–2020	122,919	0.095	0.071	0	0.991

The table displays the summary statistics on the dependent and independent variables used in the analyses throughout the paper.

registered voters and votes cast, collected at the municipality level, and compare them to the corresponding outcomes in simultaneous municipal elections.

We conducted a large-scale collection of original electoral records. Since Italy only records *elected* officials, data on all *candidates* do not exist. To address this, we contacted all Italian municipalities by email, requesting that they send us their complete electoral rosters starting from 2002. Figure A.4 is an example of an electoral roster we digitized. Among the municipalities that responded, we digitized those with at least one pre-2008 electoral roster available. In total, we obtained data for 333 municipalities for which we have the birthplaces of the candidates. For additional 343 municipalities, we collected the names of all candidates, but not their birthplaces, and in these cases we assigned nationality based on the origin of the name.[9]

[9] In practice, we use the sample of 333 'certain' municipalities, where we can confidently assign each candidate their correct birthplace, as our primary sample. As a robustness exercise in Figure A.8, we include the remaining 343 municipalities: for those, we follow Marschke et al. (2018) and rely on Ethnea (Torvik and Agarwal 2016), assigning each politician a nationality based on their first and last names. To reduce false positives, we classify a candidate as Romanian only when the joint probability that both the name and surname are Romanian exceeds 85%. The limitation of Ethnea is that while it can reliably identify Romanian candidates, it cannot distinguish Albanian or Moroccan candidates (typically classifying them as Slav and Arabic, respectively).

3.2 Organ Donation Consent Registry

We use data from the Italian Organ Donors Association (AIDO) for 2003—2018, which include the number, municipality of residence, and place of birth of individuals who consented to posthumous organ donation. While citizenship is not recorded, we proxy for country of origin using their place of birth. According to the Italian Ministry of Health, approximately 10 million people in Italy have consented to organ donation: 8.5 million through ID card issuance and 1.5 million via AIDO. Natives are asked for consent when obtaining an Italian ID card (required after age 18), but non-Italian EU residents can continue using ID cards issued by their home country.[10]

3.3 Local Public Finance

The data on local public finance come from the Italian Public Authority Data (AIDA PA). We observe annual municipal revenues by source (e.g., tax type or transfers from the provincial government) and municipal spending by type of use. To facilitate comparison across municipalities, we construct revenue and expenditure shares for categories of interest by dividing the revenue or expenditure in each category by the municipality's total revenue or total expenditure, respectively.

3.4 Migration and Sectoral Employment

For our supplementary IV analysis, we merge Italian sectoral employment data with migration data from OECD. First, we combine municipality-level sectoral employment data with nationwide foreign employment data by sector from ISTAT to estimate the share of foreign employment in each municipality. Both datasets are from the 2001 census, the last census before Romania's accession to the EU. The sectoral data cover seventeen sectors. Next, we examine annual Romanian emigration to destinations other than Italy. The OECD migration database provides yearly outflows of Romanians to OECD destinations. However, data collection is not consistent for all destinations. The outflow variable is available for the entire observation period of our IV analysis (2003–2018) for 19 OEDC countries.[11]

[10] The same applies to non-EU nationals residing in Italy, provided they obtain a residence permit.

[11] These 19 destination countries are Australia, Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, South Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Turkey.

4 Empirical Strategy

4.1 Effect of Romania's Accession to the EU in 2007

Following Romania's accession to the EU in January 2007, Romanian nationals residing in Italy gained the right to vote and run in Italian municipal elections, as well as the right to stay in the country without a residence permit or a visa. We conduct an event study around 2007 to examine the effects of this expansion of rights on political representation, prosocial behavior, the political orientation of the winning party, and local public finance. Our main specification is as following:

$$Y_{mt} = \alpha + \Big[\sum_{s=1986}^{2020} \gamma_s Immig_m^{2003} \times \mathbb{1}_t\{t = s\} \Big] + \eta_m + \theta_t + \varepsilon_{mt}. \tag{1}$$

In this equation, Y_{mt} is the outcome variable for municipality m in year t and $Immig_m^{2003}$ is the share of immigrants from a given origin country in municipality m in 2003, the first year for which we have counts of immigrants from each origin country at the municipality level. We fix the share of immigrants at its 2003 level as our time-invariant measure. We argue that the 2003 share of Romanian immigrants is exogenous to the event because the official conclusion of accession negotiations with Romania was confirmed by the European Council on December 17, 2004. In other words, Romanian residents living in Italian municipalities in 2003 could not have anticipated with certainty that they would benefit from the subsequent expansion of rights. Finally, η_m represents municipality fixed effects and θ_t denotes year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level to account for the correlations in the error term among observations in the same municipality.

In our main specification, we estimate equation (1) for Romanians, but we also estimate the specification for Albanians and Moroccans, the largest immigrant groups after Romanians during the observation period, for comparison. This placebo analysis aims to assess whether the observed changes reflect broader trends related to immigrants in general or are specifically driven by the expansion of rights to Romanian nationals. As Albanian and Moroccan immigrants do not acquire additional rights in Italy, we use them as our comparison group to separate out the general trend affecting immigrants.

Although immigrants from other EU states could, in theory, serve as a comparison group since they have had voting rights since 1996, two factors limit their usefulness for our study. First, in most of our analyses, we proxy the number of immigrants using place of birth rather than nationality due to data limitations. Many residents born in wealthier Western EU states, such as Germany or France, have Italian names, suggesting they are likely Ital-

ians born abroad rather than foreign immigrants. This complicates analysis of the relevant population, since these foreign-born Italians have always had voting rights through their Italian citizenship. Second, the number of residents born in Germany or France, the two most prominent EU birthplaces after Romania, is much smaller than the Romanian-born population. In contrast, the Albanian- and Moroccan-born populations are more comparable in size to the Romanian-born population, making them a more suitable comparison group.

Similarly, we focus on Romania rather than on other Eastern European countries admitted to the EU in the 2004 enlargement for two main reasons. First, we only observe the number of migrants by nationality in Italian municipalities starting in 2003, which prevents us from establishing a pre-period for countries admitted in 2004. Second, migration from these other countries to Italy is an order of magnitude smaller than migration from Romania. For instance, despite Poland being the largest country of origin among the 2004 entrants, there are ten times more Romanians than Poles living in Italy.

4.2 Effect of Expanding Immigrant Rights vs. New Arrivals

The event-study specification effectively reduces to a difference-in-differences design, in which we compare pre- and post-2007 outcomes for municipalities with many Romanian residents in 2003 to those with few. The event ensures that Romanian immigrants in Italy could only vote and reside without a permit after 2007.

However, this approach does not allow us to distinguish between two key effects: the impact of the rights expansion on Romanians who were already residing in Italy before 2007 and the effects driven by the influx of new Romanian migrants who arrived afterward, whose choice of destination is positively correlated with the location of pre-existing Romanians. It is important to separate which group contributed to the increase in Romanian political representation and integration for two main reasons. First, clarifying whether the effect stems from the extension of rights to pre-existing migrants or from the post-2007 inflow of new migrants carries distinct policy implications. Second, new Romanian migrants may have selectively migrated to municipalities with a pre-existing Romanian population for reasons correlated with the outcome variable, such as the presence of a Romanian-born politician, which raises identification concerns. We address both issues by employing the following instrumented difference-in-differences specification:

$$\begin{aligned} Y_{mt} = \beta_0 + \beta^E Early_{mt} + \gamma^E Early_{mt} \times Post2007_t \\ + \gamma^N \widehat{New_{mt}} + \eta_m + \theta_t + \nu_{mt}. \end{aligned} \tag{2}$$

Here, $Early_{mt}$ denotes the share of pre-existing Romanians, and New_{mt} the share of Romanians who arrived in municipality m in year t, after the accession. $Early_{mt}$ evolves over time until 2007, after which it is fixed at the 2007 level. In an alternative specification, we use the share of Romanian immigrants in municipality m in 2003 as an exogenous proxy for $Early_{mt}$.

New_{mt}presents the endogeneity problem described above. To address this, we construct an instrument for the share of new Romanian immigrants that captures inflows into a given municipality but is otherwise uncorrelated with the outcome variables. More precisely, we instrument for New_{mt}, with the following expression:

$$Z_{mt} = \Big(\sum_{sector} EmpShare^{2001}_{m,sector} \times ForeignEmp^{2001}_{sector} \Big) \times Outflow_t. \tag{3}$$

In this equation, $EmpShare^{2001}_{m,sector}$ is the employment share of a given *sector* in municipality m in 2001 and $ForeignEmp^{2001}_{sector}$ is the number of foreign workers employed in the *sector* in year 2000 as a fraction of total workers in the *sector* nationwide. Our data provide the municipal-level employment share for 17 sectors in 2001. The total outflow of Romanian migrants to destinations other than Italy from 2007 to year t is denoted by $Outflow_t$. The idea is to first weight the sectoral employment share in each municipality by how likely each sector's job openings are to be filled by foreign workers. Then, this figure is multiplied by the yearly outflow of Romanians to estimate the amount of foreign employment that is likely to be taken up by Romanians.

The key idea is that in each municipality, there is a demand for labor in certain sectors that is more likely to be met by foreign workers than by natives. If foreign labor from one origin country substitutes for labor from another, Romanians are assumed to fill these positions proportionately, with the proportion approximated by Romanian outflows to destinations other than Italy. We restrict the analysis to sectors in which Romanians could work without a permit during the adjustment period (2007–2011), thereby excluding sectors such as manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade that employ many foreign employees but were inaccessible to new arrivals after accession. In fact, Romanians who arrived after the accession were far more likely to be employed in sectors exempted from work permit requirements for Romanians.[12] [13]

[12]See Section 2.

[13]Included sectors are Agriculture, Hunting, and Forestry; Fishing, Pisciculture, and Related Services; Construction; Hotels and Restaurants; Financial Intermediaries; Real Estate, Informatics, Research, Other Professional and Entrepreneurial Activities; Public Administration and Defense; Education; Healthcare and Other Social Services; Domestic Services for Families; and International Organization. Those omitted are Mining and Quarrying; Manufacturing; Energy Utilities; Wholesale and Retail Trade, Repair of Motor Vehicles and Household Goods; Transportation and Distribution; and Other Public Social Services.

4.2.1 Identification Assumptions

Our identification relies on two main assumptions. First, sectoral employment in 2001 is predetermined and exogenous. It cannot be affected by the Romanian inflow, which mainly occurred years after 2001. Moreover, we do not see a reason to suspect that having a greater share of industries that are more likely to hire foreign employees would affect the likelihood of electing a Romanian-born councilor in any way other than through the change in the Romanian share of the given municipality. Second, the outflow of Romanians in a given year to a destination other than Italy is determined by the conditions in Romania, such as the country's economic or political circumstances, rather than by conditions in Italy. A remaining threat to identification is that the sectoral composition of a labor market could influence other political outcomes. However, we employ this IV approach only when our dependent variable is either the presence of a Romanian-born councilor or Romanians' consent to organ donation. We argue that sectoral employment can affect these specific outcomes only by determining the share of Romanians in the municipality. This would imply that the exclusion restriction is not violated.

5 Findings

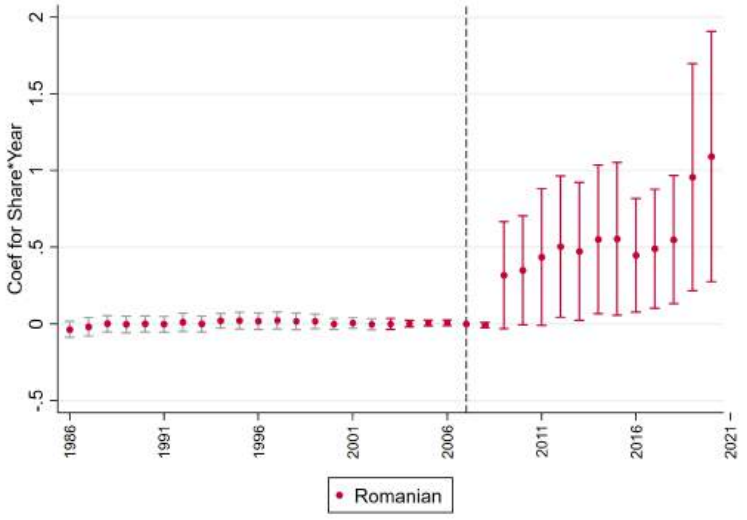
5.1 Romanian Political Representation

5.1.1 Romanian-Born Councilors

Figure 3 presents the event-study estimation of equation (1) examining whether the likelihood of electing a Romanian-born councilor increased after Romania's accession to the EU in 2007. Our outcome variable is a binary indicator of whether the municipality has a Romanian-born councilor, rather than a continuous measure of the total number of Romanian-born councilors, since it is very rare for a municipality to have more than one. The results show an insignificant and flat pre-trend before 2007. We include the 1986–2002 period, despite fixing the immigrant share at the 2003 level, to demonstrate that migrants did not select into municipalities that already had Romanian councilors.

The point estimate for the likelihood of having a Romanian-born councilor in municipalities with a larger time-invariant share of Romanians begins to increase in 2009. The increase starts in 2009, rather than 2008, due to the asynchronous cycles of municipal elections. Figure 4 shows that only a few elections occurred in 2008 and the majority of municipalities had elections in 2009. Moreover, the bureaucratic steps for Romanians to be fully registered and eligible to vote and run in elections, such as registering and gathering necessary documents

Figure 3: Event Study for Political Representation with Romanian Share Fixed at its 2003 Level



The graph above plots the coefficients from the event study for the interaction terms between Romanian share fixed at its 2003 level and year dummies as shown in Equation 1. The dependent variable is an indicator variable equal to 1 when the given municipality has a Romanian-born councilor in the given year and 0 otherwise. The regression separately controls for municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

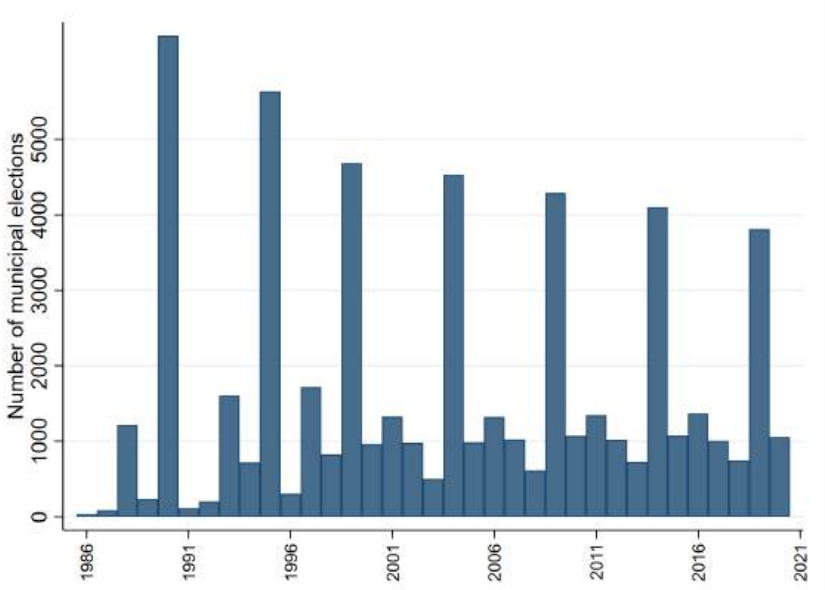
from the home country, were often delayed. The process was particularly slow in the early years, when it was still new and the offices were overcrowded.[14]

We conduct additional analyses to strengthen our findings. Figure A.5 presents an alternative specification in which we add Bulgarian citizens and representatives to the corresponding number of Romanians, accounting for the fact that Bulgaria also joined the EU in 2007. The results remain unchanged. Next, we show that our finding holds even after controlling for the presence of other large immigrant groups. We extend equation (1) to include the fixed shares of Albanians and Moroccans as well as these fixed shares interacted with year dummies. We plot the result in Figure 5a and confirm that the increase in the likelihood of having a Romanian-born councilor persists.

We perform placebo analyses using two comparison groups: Albanians and Moroccans. The outcome variable in these analyses is the presence of an Albanian-born or Moroccan-born councilor, respectively. To account for potential confounding from the presence of the other large immigrant groups, we control for the fixed shares of the remaining two immigrant

[14]In particular, while Romanians theoretically had the right to vote since April 2007, newspaper articles (Melting Pot Europa 2007) report that registration procedures were immediately suspended due to crowding out and the municipal authorities' lack of procedural know-how. This issue likely affected 2008 as well.

Figure 4: Municipal Election Cycle



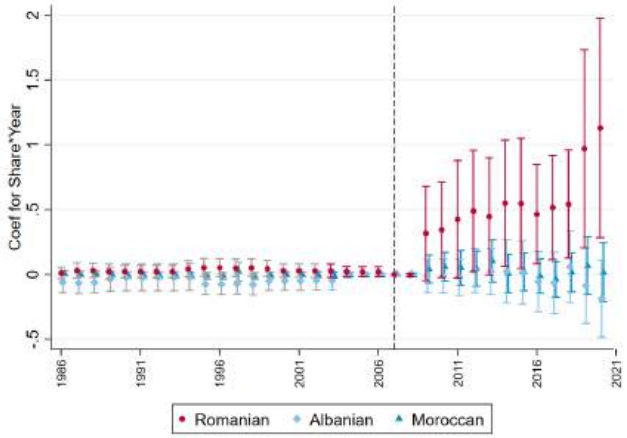
The graph above displays the number of municipal elections that took place in each year from 1986 to 2020. Although the municipal election cycle is asynchronous, the majority of municipalities hold their election during the biggest cycle.

groups and these shares interacted with the year dummies. The results are shown in Figure 5b and Figure 5c. We do not observe an increase around the time of Romania's accession in the likelihood of having an Albanian-born councilor in Figure 5b or a Moroccan-born councilor in Figure 5c. We conclude that no event around 2007 other than Romania's accession increased the likelihood of having a Romanian-born councilor. In other words, we rule out the possibility that the effect we observe is due to a confounding event that occurred in 2007 and increased the likelihood of electing a foreign-born councilor.

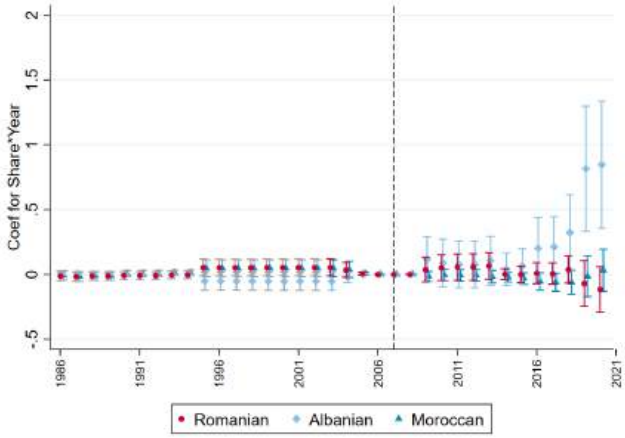
Starting in 2019 and 2020, our placebo analyses for Albanians and Moroccans show statistically significant coefficients, although much smaller in magnitude than those for Romanians. We explain this trend in two ways. First, voters in municipalities with larger immigrant populations may have become progressively more open to the idea of electing a foreign-born councilor due to persistent exposure. Second, and more importantly, Albanian and Moroccan immigrants increasingly acquired Italian citizenship at higher rates than Romanians, granting them the right to vote and run for office. This represented a comparable, if not stronger, expansion of rights than gaining EU citizenship. Figure 6 shows the annual naturalization counts (in thousands) of individuals from Romania, Albania, and Morocco. Naturalization counts are much higher for Albanians and Moroccans than for Romanians,

Figure 5: Event Study for Likelihood of Having a Councilor of Specified Origin with Fixed Immigrant Shares (Controlling for the Presence of Other Immigrant Communities)

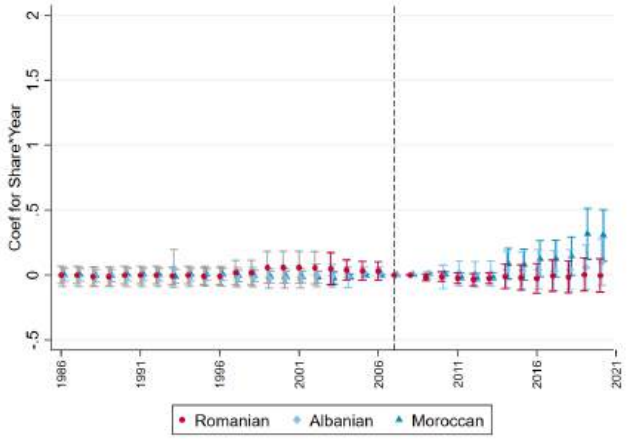
(a) Romanian-born councilor



(b) Albanian-born councilor



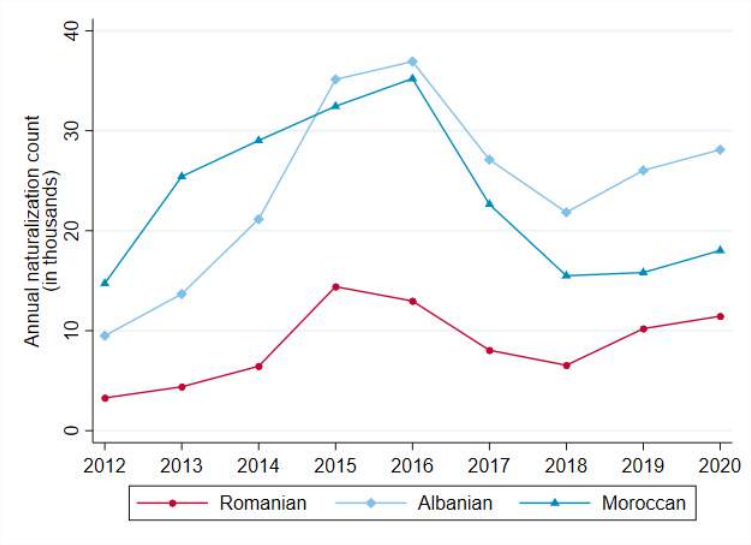
(c) Moroccan-born councilor



The graphs above plot the coefficients from the event study for the interaction terms between immigrant shares fixed at their 2003 level and the year dummies, as described in Equation 1. The dependent variable is an indicator variable equal to 1 when the given municipality has a councilor of the specified origin in the given year and 0 otherwise. The coefficients are from a single regression including both interaction terms between Romanian share and year dummies and interaction terms between presence of other immigrant communities (Albanian and Moroccans) and year dummies, which act as control variables. The regression separately controls for municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

likely reflecting the timing of immigration for the different groups combined with Italy's long residency requirements for citizenship. Indeed, Albanians and Moroccans began immigrating to Italy in large numbers before Romanians. For example, many Albanians migrated in the 1990s following the fall of the Albanian communist regime.

Figure 6: Annual Naturalization Count in Italy by Origin Country



The graph above displays annual naturalization count in Italy for migrants from Romania, Albania, and Morocco respectively. We do not have data on naturalization before 2012.

Finally, Figure A.6 aggregates the observations to the electoral-cycle level and presents an event study in which the outcome is the likelihood of having a Romanian, Albanian, or Moroccan councilor, respectively. Serving as a summary of the preceding analyses, this exercise qualitatively confirms our earlier findings, with Romanians emerging as the only group whose representation surged immediately after 2007.

In an additional analysis, Table 2 pools the years into two periods—pre- and post-2007—to obtain an average estimate of the effect of enfranchisement on political representation. The dependent variable in the first three columns is an indicator equal to one if a given municipality has a Romanian-born councilor in a given year. The following six columns present analogous results for Albanian- or Moroccan-born councilors. Our independent variable of interest is the immigrant share of a given community interacted with the post-2007 indicator. Columns (1), (4), and (7) include province and year fixed effects; columns (2), (5), and (8) control for province-by-year fixed effects; and columns (3), (6), and (9) include municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered by municipality.

Table 2 shows a significant increase in the likelihoods of having a Romanian-born coun-

cilor after 2007, as well as that for Albanian-born and Moroccan-born councilors. However, the magnitude for Romanians is double that for Albanians and nearly five times that for Moroccans. A municipality with one more percentage point in the Romanian share in 2003 increases its likelihood of electing a Romanian-born councilor by 0.497 percentage point. In contrast, having one more percentage point in the Albanian or Moroccan share in 2003 increases the likelihood of an Albanian-born or Moroccan-born councilor by only 0.237 and 0.096 percentage points, respectively. Once again, we attribute the positive and significant, though small, coefficients for Albanians and Moroccans to their high naturalization rates, which led to the enfranchisement of these immigrants, who generally arrived in Italy earlier than Romanians.

Table 2: Political Representation (Pooled)

Dep var: presence of councilor born in	(1) Romania	(2) Romania	(3) Romania	(4) Albania	(5) Albania	(6) Albania	(7) Morocco	(8) Morocco	(9) Morocco
Romanian share in 2003	-0.024	0.006		0.005	0.007		0.028	-0.004	
	(0.040)	(0.025)		(0.021)	(0.023)		(0.033)	(0.022)	
Albanian share in 2003	0.065*	0.042		0.025	0.025		0.000	0.017	
	(0.036)	(0.039)		(0.032)	(0.030)		(0.031)	(0.027)	
Moroccan share in 2003	-0.029	-0.020		0.014	0.002		-0.050***	-0.013	
	(0.025)	(0.016)		(0.016)	(0.014)		(0.017)	(0.012)	
Romanian share in 2003 × Post2007	**0.497*****	**0.456*****	**0.558*****	-0.006	-0.008	0.003	-0.044	0.001	-0.045
	(0.140)	(0.157)	(0.133)	(0.031)	(0.036)	(0.028)	(0.039)	(0.026)	(0.041)
Albanian share in 2003 × Post2007	-0.008	0.025	0.039	**0.237*****	**0.236*****	**0.242*****	0.024	0.002	0.029
	(0.071)	(0.081)	(0.065)	(0.069)	(0.082)	(0.066)	(0.040)	(0.039)	(0.038)
Moroccan share in 2003 × Post2007	0.035	0.023	0.073	-0.040*	-0.024	-0.035	**0.096*****	**0.045***	**0.098*****
	(0.049)	(0.053)	(0.047)	(0.024)	(0.021)	(0.025)	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.029)
Province FE	✓			✓			✓		
Year FE	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Province × Year FE		✓			✓			✓	
Municipality FE			✓			✓			✓
N	137,916	137,916	138,120	137,916	137,916	138,120	137,916	137,916	138,120
Dep var mean	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
Adj. R^2	0.009	0.008	0.272	0.020	0.023	0.225	0.006	0.005	0.271

Standard errors clustered by municipality in parentheses * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$
The dependent variable is an indicator variable equal to 1 when a given municipality has at least one councilor born in the origin country specified in the second row in a given year.

5.1.2 Mechanisms

In this subsection, we study the mechanisms behind the increase in the likelihood of having a Romanian-born councilor. Several channels could explain this. At one extreme, granting

eligibility to run in local elections could lead to a sharp increase in the supply of Romanian politicians. In this case, even with a relatively stable success rate, an increasing number of Romanian-born candidates could secure office. At the other extreme, as Romanian immigrants gain the right to vote, even a fixed number of Romanian-born candidates may become more successful due to a more favorable electorate.

Supply of Romanian Candidates We begin by examining the effect of EU enlargement on the supply of Romanian candidates. Unfortunately, administrative data on municipal candidates who were not elected do not exist in Italy. Instead, unicipalities sometimes maintain their own records of previous elections, often as hard copies of candidate rosters. As a result, we rely on original, manually collected data on candidates in Italian municipal elections.

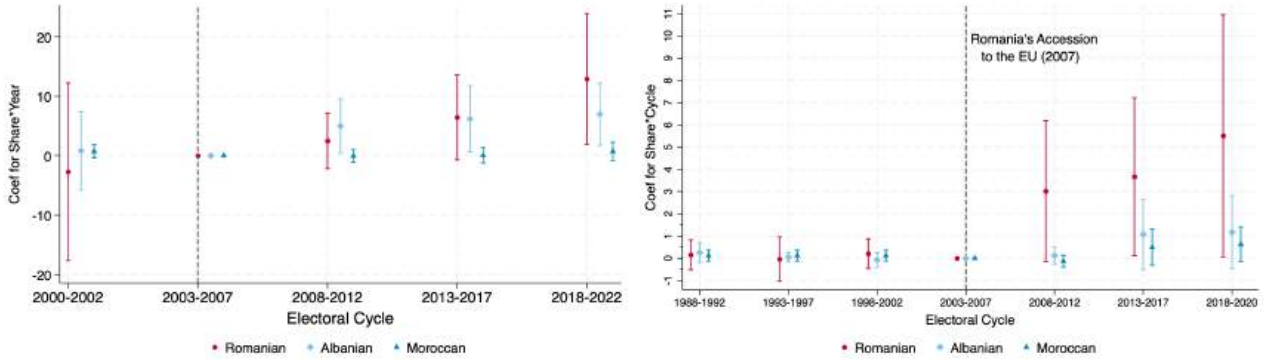
Figure 7a presents the event-study estimation of equation (1), using the number of Romanian candidates as our outcome. The figure shows that the number of Romanian candidates increased over time. We observe a strikingly similar pattern for Albanians, while the number of Moroccan-born candidates remains constant. This pattern is even more stark if we restrict the analysis in Figure A.6 to the subsample of 333 municipalities for which we have information on the name and birthplace of municipal candidates (as in Figure 7b). Comparing Figure 7a and Figure 7b, which use the same subsample, we clearly see that the increase in Romanian candidates is comparable to the increase in the number of Albanian-born candidates, but the number of elected Romanian-born councilors increases much more than the number of councilors from any other comparison group. These results suggest that the increase in the number of elected councilors is not solely driven by the supply of candidates.

While the supply of Albanian candidates closely resembles that of Romanian candidates, no comparable increase is observed for Moroccan candidates. This could be due to a couple of different reasons. First, Morocco is often considered a weak democracy (Maghraoui 2002), consistently scoring lower than both Romania and Albania on the Democracy Index reported by the Economist Intelligence Unit.[15] This may suggest a lower tradition of electoral participation, thus explaining the low candidacy rates. Second, voter bias against candidates of a different religion may have limited Moroccan representation. While both Albania and Morocco have significant Muslim populations, Muslims account for only about half of the Albanian population. Moreover, Albania has largely embraced secularism, especially after decades of communism (Vickers 2011; Tokrri et al. 2021; Abazi 2022), whereas Morocco's

[15]The first Democracy Index was reported in 2006 and the index for each country of interest can be seen in Figure A.9. The countries with the most similar index values to Morocco during the observation period are Pakistan and Sierra Leone.

Figure 7: Likelihood of Candidate vs. Councilor of Specified Origin in 333 Municipalities with Complete Identity Data

(a) Probability of Immigrant Candidate (b) Probability of Immigrant Councilor



The graphs above plot the coefficients from the event study where the years are collapsed to corresponding electoral cycles. The plotted coefficients are for the interaction terms between immigrants' share fixed at its 2003 level and time dummies. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 when the given municipality has a Romanian-born, Albanian-born, or Moroccan-born candidate in the given year, and 0 otherwise. The regression separately controls for municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level. The sample contains 333 municipalities for which we have data on the name and birthplace of municipal candidates.

official religion is Islam.[16]

Competitive Elections Second, we examine whether the likelihood of electing a Romanian-born councilor increases in a competitive election setting. Specifically, we look at whether municipalities that were *expecting* a competitive election are more likely to have a Romanian-born councilor. This distinction is important because elections can become competitive as a result of the composition of candidates. For instance, including a minority candidate could mobilize minority constituents in support, while also prompting natives to turn out to oppose the candidate. To rule out this reverse causality, we focus on settings where competitive elections were expected. The following specification is intended to answer this question.

[16]Madrid et al. (2022) find evidence that voters evaluate candidates from religious out-groups more negatively, and Colussi et al. (2021) finds that the salience of Muslim minorities increases negative attitudes toward Muslims.

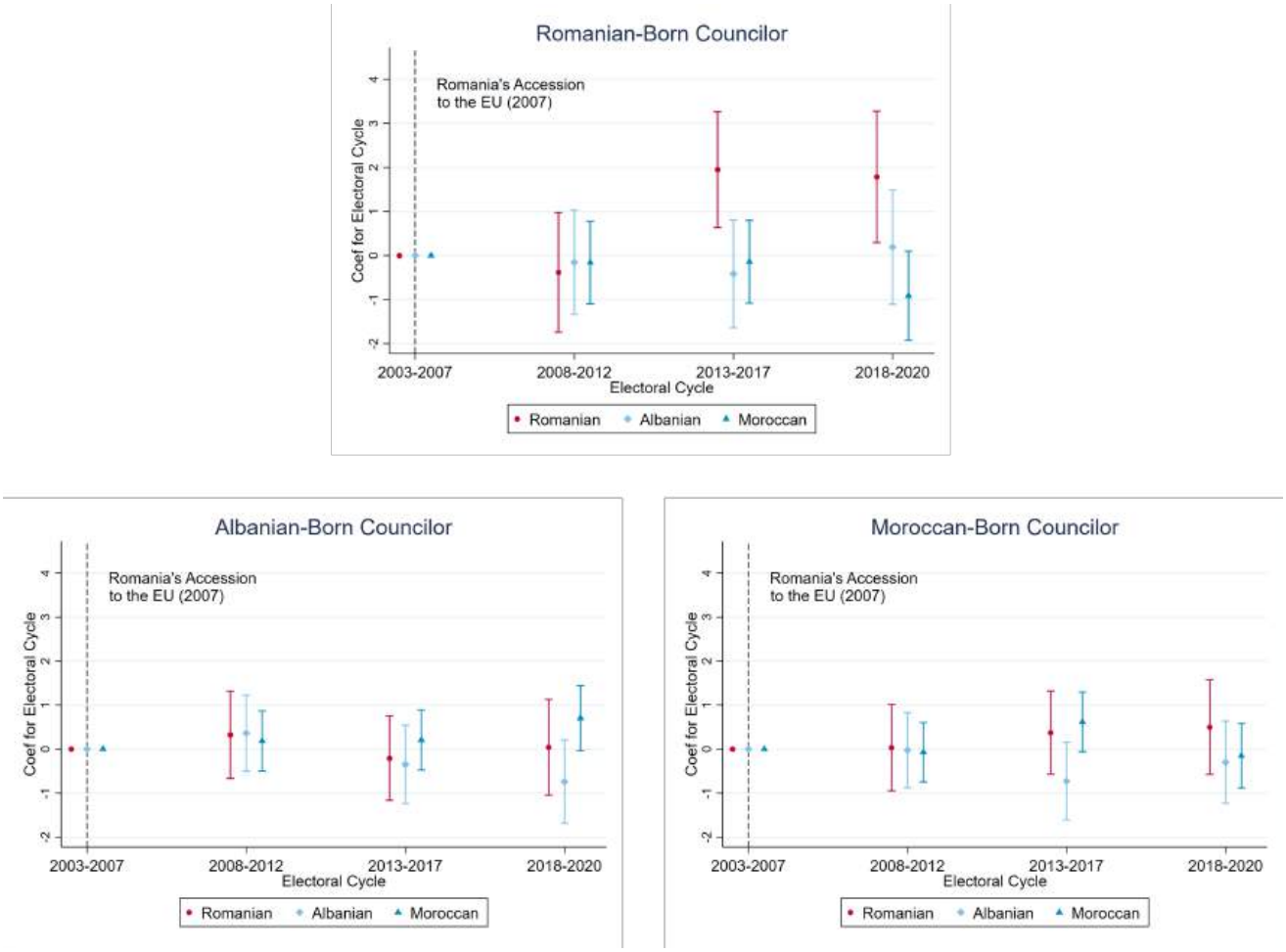
$$
\begin{aligned}
Rep_{mc} = a_0 + a_1 Competitive_{mc} + \sum_{s=3,4,5} \left[b_s Cycle_s \times Competitive_{mc} \right] \\
+ \sum_{o \in \mathbb{O}} \Big\{ c^o Share^{o,2003} \times Competitive_{mc} + \sum_{s=3,4,5} \left[d_s^o Share^o \times Cycle_s \right] \\
+ \sum_{s=3,4,5} \left[e_s^o Share^{o,2003} \times Cycle_s \times Competitive_{mc} \right] \Big\} \\
+ \eta_m + \theta_t + \tilde{\varepsilon}_{mc}.
\end{aligned} \tag{4}
$$

Here, Rep_{mc} is an indicator equal to 1 if municipality m in electoral cycle c has a councilor born in a given origin country. Considering Romania's accession in 2007 and the 5-year electoral cycle in municipal elections, we define the cycles around 2007 to include 5 years of observation. The variable $Competitive_{mc}$ is an indicator variable equal to 1 if municipality m had a competitive election in cycle $c-1$. We define a competitive election as one where the vote-share gap between the top two parties is less than 5 percentage points. The origin countries considered in this specification are again $\mathbb{O}$ ={Romania, Albania, Morocco}. We include municipality and cycle fixed effects, which are denoted, respectively, as η_m and θ_c.

We hypothesize that if political parties anticipate a tight election, they are more likely to include minority candidates in their list of councilor candidates to gain votes from enfranchised minority constituents, especially in municipalities where minority communities are large. The coefficient e_s^o for the triple interaction term $Share^{o,2003} \times Cycle_s \times Competitive_{mc}$ for each cycle is shown in Figure 8. We see a significant increase in the likelihood of having a Romanian-born councilor in municipalities that were expecting competitive elections in the 2013–2017 and 2018–2020 electoral cycles, as the Romanian share of the population rises. The coefficient is not significant in the 2008-2012 electoral cycle, which was the first cycle after Romanians gained the right to vote and stand for municipal elections. This could be because it takes time for parties to learn about the effectiveness of having a Romanian-born candidate on their slate. We do not find any effect in our placebo specifications in which the dependent variable is the likelihood of having an Albanian-born or Moroccan-born councilor. Table 3 shows the corresponding coefficient estimates and confirms a positive and significant triple-interaction term for Romanians, and virtually no effect for the other groups.

Romanian votes To ensure that it was plausible for parties to consider including a minority candidate, we analyze whether the newly enfranchised Romanians registered to vote. Although Italian citizens do not need to register to vote, residents from other EU member states must do so the first time they vote. Unfortunately, we do not observe the number of Romanians registered to vote in each municipality until 2011. To circumvent this issue, we

Figure 8: Foreign-born Councilors in Competitive Elections



The graphs above plot coefficients from the triple-difference specification for the interaction terms between immigrant shares fixed at their 2003 level, the cycle dummies, and an indicator for close elections, as shown in Equation (3). The dependent variable is stated above each graph. It is an indicator equal to 1 when the municipality has a councilor who was born in the specific foreign country in the given cycle. In each graph, the coefficients are from a single regression where the main coefficients of interest are those for interaction terms between the immigrant share of interest and cycle dummies, while controlling for the presence of other immigrant communities (as in Figure 5a). The regression separately controls for municipality and year fixed effects.

Table 3: Likelihood of Electing a Romanian-Born Councilor in Competitive Elections

Dep var: presence of councilor born in	(1) Romania	(2) Romania	(3) Albania	(4) Albania	(5) Morocco	(6) Morocco
Romanian share in 2003	0.932***	0.952***		0.003		-0.052
× Cycle 3	(0.154)	(0.156)		(0.114)		(0.113)
Romanian share in 2003	0.241	0.287*		0.063		-0.121
× Cycle 4	(0.155)	(0.158)		(0.115)		(0.114)
Romanian share in 2003	1.755***	1.830***		-0.140		-0.145
× Cycle 5	(0.181)	(0.183)		(0.134)		(0.132)
Romanian share in 2003	**-0.479**	**-0.380**		0.327		0.036
× Cycle 3 × Competitive Election	**(0.670)**	**(0.693)**		(0.505)		(0.499)
Romanian share in 2003	**1.793*** **	**1.949*** **		-0.206		0.375
× Cycle 4 × Competitive Election	**(0.647)**	**(0.670)**		(0.489)		(0.483)
Romanian share in 2003	**1.413***	**1.786****		0.045		0.501
× Cycle 5 × Competitive Election	**(0.733)**	**(0.761)**		(0.555)		(0.548)
Albanian share in 2003		-0.057	0.164*	0.165*		0.019
× Cycle 3		(0.131)	(0.093)	(0.095)		(0.094)
Albanian share in 2003		-0.173	0.333***	0.349***		0.180*
× Cycle 4		(0.135)	(0.096)	(0.099)		(0.097)
Albanian share in 2003		-0.420***	1.140***	1.173***		0.134
× Cycle 5		(0.162)	(0.115)	(0.118)		(0.117)
Albanian share in 2003		-0.154	**0.466**	**0.362**		-0.023
× Cycle 3 × Competitive Election		(0.603)	**(0.416)**	**(0.440)**		(0.434)
Albanian share in 2003		-0.417	**-0.308**	**-0.348**		-0.725
× Cycle 4 × Competitive Election		(0.623)	**(0.430)**	**(0.454)**		(0.449)
Albanian share in 2003		0.192	**-0.482**	**-0.740**		-0.297
× Cycle 5 × Competitive Election		(0.662)	**(0.456)**	**(0.483)**		(0.477)
Moroccan share in 2003		-0.049		-0.011	-0.023	-0.021
× Cycle 3		(0.096)		(0.070)	(0.068)	(0.069)
Moroccan share in 2003		-0.081		-0.094	0.029	0.012
× Cycle 4		(0.098)		(0.072)	(0.070)	(0.071)
Moroccan share in 2003		-0.062		-0.067	0.511***	0.500***
× Cycle 5		(0.125)		(0.091)	(0.088)	(0.090)
Moroccan share in 2003		-0.158		0.186	**-0.061**	**-0.071**
× Cycle 3 × Competitive Election		(0.478)		(0.349)	**(0.327)**	**(0.344)**
Moroccan share in 2003		-0.141		0.209	**0.551***	**0.616***
× Cycle 4 × Competitive Election		(0.479)		(0.349)	**(0.326)**	**(0.345)**
Moroccan share in 2003		-0.912*		0.704*	**-0.147**	**-0.150**
× Cycle 5 × Competitive Election		(0.516)		(0.376)	**(0.349)**	**(0.372)**
N	24,916	24,916	24,916	24,916	24,916	24,916
Adj. R^2	0.12995	0.13019	0.02315	0.02312	0.07202	0.07212

The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 when a municipality has at least one councilor born in the origin country specified in the second row in a given year. Standard errors clustered by municipality in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

exploit the fact that only Italian citizens can vote in the regional elections and focus on the dates when the regional elections took place simultaneously with municipal elections. We estimate the following regression:

$$DifVoters_{mt} = b_0 + \big[\sum_s b_s Immig_m^{2003} \times \mathbb{1}_t\{t = s\}\big] + \eta_m + \theta_t + e_{mt}. \tag{5}$$

The dependent variable $DifVoters_{mt}$ is the difference in the level of registered voters, as a percentage of the municipality population, between municipal and regional elections. We divide the level difference by the population because more populous municipalities would otherwise mechanically show a larger difference. The years in which we observe the municipality election taking place on the same day as the regional election for some municipalities are 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015, and 2020.[17] Municipality and year fixed effects are included.

The coefficients b_s and their corresponding confidence intervals at the 95 percent level are plotted in Figure 9*a*. We observe a significant and large difference between the number of voters registered for municipal elections and that for regional elections as a share of the municipal population in 2010, 2015, and 2020 in municipalities with a higher share of Romanians. The estimates for the placebo groups, Albanians and Moroccans, are close to zero and insignificant. Since the difference between the number of registered voters for municipal and regional elections increased, the number of municipal constituents of these places must have increased. The fact that the gap increased precisely in municipalities with more Romanians and precisely after their enfranchisement, together with the fact that we see no parallel effect in places with more Albanians or Moroccans, makes it clear that the enfranchisement and subsequent voter registration of Romanians explains this increased gap. This is consistent with the conjecture that political parties consider running Romanian candidates to earn the votes of registered Romanian voters.

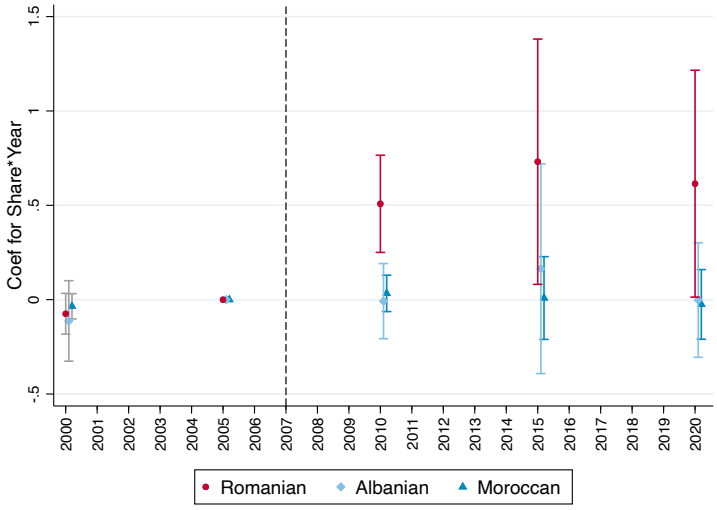
Figure 9*b* also plots coefficients b_s, but the dependent variable is now the difference between the number of actual voters in municipal elections and that in regional elections. If more Romanians turn out in municipal elections, the estimates should be significant and positive. Once again, we see a positive and significant increase in the discrepancy in actual votes between municipal and regional elections, exactly in municipalities with more (enfranchised) Romanian citizens, but not in municipalities with a larger share of other groups of non-enfranchised migrants. This indicates that Romanians not only registered but also turned out to vote.

The precise interpretation of the coefficient is not straightforward, the caveat being that

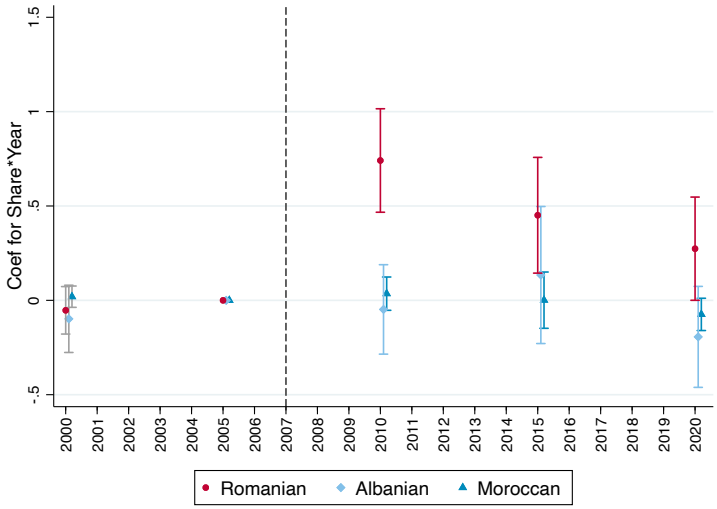
[17]The exact dates are April 26, 2000; April 3, 2005; March 28, 2010; May 31, 2015; and September 20, 2020. We dropped the two municipalities whose municipal and regional elections were simultaneously held in 2013, 2014, 2019 because of the small number and unstable sample.

Figure 9: Registered and Actual Voters

(a) Difference Between the Number of Registered Voters in Municipal vs. Regional Elections as a Share of Municipal Population



(b) Difference Between the Number of Actual Voters in Municipal vs. Regional Elections as a Share of Municipal Population



The graph in panel (a) plots coefficients for interaction terms between immigrant share of interest at its 2003 level and year dummies, as in equation 5. The dependent variable is the difference in the number of registered voters, as a percentage of the municipality population, between municipal and regional elections. The dependent variable for the graph in panel (b) is the difference between the number of actual voters in municipal elections and that in regional elections. In both graphs, the red dot refers to the regression where Romanians are the relevant immigrant group, whereas the light blue diamond and the blue triangle correspond to separate regressions where the immigrant shares of interest are Albanians and Moroccans, respectively. We restrict the analysis to the main cycle of regional elections: a five-year interval between 2000 and 2020.

the independent variables are based on the fixed share of the Romanian population in 2003. At face value, the coefficient suggests that a 1 percentage point increase in the number of Romanians as a share of the municipal population in 2003 increased municipal registration by 0.5 percentage points. Similarly, a 1 percentage point increase in the number of Romanians as a share of the municipal population in 2003 increased turnout by 0.5 percentage points. However, in practice, a 1 percentage point increase in the share of Romanians in 2003 likely leads to a much larger impact in the following years, when we measure the electoral returns. Therefore, the actual estimates are likely smaller than what is suggested by the initial interpretation.[18]

Finally, we analyze the partisan affiliation of elected Romanian-born councilors. The political orientation of these councilors is illustrated in Table 4. There is no statistical difference between Romanian-born and non-Romanian-born councilors in terms of ideological affiliation. However, Romanian-born councilors are significantly more likely to belong to the winning party than the non-Romanian-born councilors. We then split the sample of councilors into pre- and post-2014 elections. We find that Romanian councilors were significantly less likely to belong to the winning party before 2014. This suggests that, over time, Romanian-born candidates were included in the parties with greater support from the municipal population, namely incumbents or close opponents. Alternatively, it could indicate that having a Romanian-born candidate helped these parties win.

Table 4: Political Orientation of Romanian Councilors

	Non-Romanian-born			Romanian-born			
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	Difference
Winning party	790030	0.60	0.49	265	0.68	0.47	0.083***
Civic	1326900	0.74	0.44	369	0.72	0.45	-0.021
Center	1326900	0.01	0.11	369	0.01	0.07	-0.007
Left	1326900	0.12	0.32	369	0.12	0.33	0.007
Right	1326900	0.10	0.30	369	0.11	0.32	0.017
Winning party(year<2014)	268089	0.44	0.50	53	0.30	0.46	-0.137**

The table above reports summary statistics of the partisan affiliation of the elected councilors. The last row reports statistics on the Romanian and non-Romanian-born councilors who were elected before 2014 and were members of the winning party or coalition in their municipality.

[18] A regression of share of Romanians in 2003 on share of Romanians in 2015, suggests that a 1 pp increase in the former leads to about 2.1 pp increase in in the latter (results are similar for 2010 and 2020). This would imply a registration and turnout rate of around 23% (namely 0.5/2.1). Indeed, in 2015 we know about 80,000 Romanians were registered to vote. While we do not have statistics on the share of Romanians with right to vote in Italy (i.e. those above 18 who did not lose voting rights in Romania), this number would likely account for about 10-15% of the potential voters. The discrepancy may be partly reconciled by looking at the survey of Romanians in large Italian cities of Table A.1, which indicates indeed a 24% registration rate among pre-existing Romanian migrants but only a 5% rate among new arrivals. This would suggest that newly arrived migrants had a near-zero registration rate and we should thus take the estimate more literally, that is, that a 1pp increase in 2003 share of Romanians leads to an up to 50% registration rate, *among early mover Romanians.*

5.1.3 Enfranchisement of Pre-existing Immigrants vs. New Arrivals

In this subsection, we disentangle whether the increase in the likelihood of having a Romanian-born councilor is driven by the enfranchisement of the pre-existing population or by the arrival of newly enfranchised Romanians. To do so, we use an IV approach and instrument for New_{mt} in equation (2) with the expression in equation (3). The first-stage results are presented in columns (1) and (2) of Table 5. The instrument strongly predicts the share of new Romanians at the municipality-by-year level, thus satisfying the relevance condition. In column (1), we use the time-invariant Romanian share at the 2003 level for $Early_{mt}$, whereas in column (2), we let $Early_{mt}$ equal the current Romanian share in year t up to 2007 and fix the share at the 2007 share from 2008 onward. The former specification is more similar to our specification when looking at Romanian representation, while the latter more precisely matches the number of pre-existing Romanians over time. In both specifications, the relevance of the instrument is strong. The coefficient for New_{mt} is positive and statistically significant. Further, the Kleibergen-Paap F-statistic ranges from 42.70 to 47.74 and shows that we do not suffer from a weak instrument problem.

Columns (3)-(6) of Table 5 present a comparison of the OLS and 2SLS specifications of equation (2). Columns (3) and (4) present the results from the OLS specification. Columns (5) and (6) are the 2SLS results that correspond to the first stage specifications shown in columns (1) and (2). In both columns (3) and (4), the OLS estimates are significant for both the pre-existing share of Romanians and the new Romanian arrivals. However, once we instrument for the inflow of new arrivals, the 2SLS estimates for new arrivals are no longer significant, and, if anything, their point estimates are negative. On the other hand, the effect for the pre-existing share remains significant and positive. This means the IV specification corrected for a downward bias in the effect of pre-existing Romanian share and an upward bias in the effect of the new arrivals' share found in the OLS estimates. In the preferred specification in column (5), the estimate indicates that a municipality with one more percentage point of pre-existing Romanian population increases its likelihood of electing a Romanian-born councilor by 0.472 percentage points. We conclude that the effect of enfranchisement on Romanian-born political representation is mainly driven by Romanians who were already living in Italy prior to the accession.

Based on the survey data on Romanian migrants in Italy from WIIW (2012) weighted for national representation, we find that 23.89% of Romanian migrants who arrived in Italy between 2004 and 2006 were registered to vote, whereas only 5.36% of Romanian migrants who arrived between 2007 and 2010 had registered to vote.[19] This comparison of voter

[19]The unweighted percentages of registered to vote are 23.48% and 5.32%, respectively.

Table 5: Likelihood of Electing Romanian-Born Councilor

	(1) First Stage	(2) First Stage	(3) OLS	(4) OLS	(5) 2SLS	(6) 2SLS
Romanian share in 2003	0.7581***		0.271**		0.472*	
× Post2007	(0.0541)		(0.130)		(0.276)	
Early Romanian Share		-0.0385		0.124***		0.102
		(0.0574)		(0.033)		(0.106)
Early Romanian Share		0.5726***		0.218**		0.518*
× Post2007		(0.0431)		(0.099)		(0.274)
Instrument	**0.0068*** **	**0.0075*** **				
	(0.0010)	**(0.0011)**				
New Romanian Inflow			0.152**	0.133*	-0.117	-0.398
			(0.066)	(0.065)	(0.336)	(0.473)
Municipality FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Obs	115,887	115,897	115,887	115,897	115,887	115,887
Kleibergen-Paap rk Wald F statistic	42.70	47.74	-	-	-	-
Dep var mean	-	-	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002

Columns (1) and (2) from the table above report the first stage results for the 2SLS IV regression in equation (2). In column (1), we use Romanian share at the 2003 level for $Early_{mt}$, in column (2), we let $Early_{mt}$ equal to the current Romanian share in year t up to 2007 and fix the share at the 2007 share from 2008 onward. Columns (3)-(6) present a comparison of the OLS and 2SLS specifications of Equation 6. Columns (3) and (4) present the results from the OLS specification. Columns (5) and (6) are 2SLS results that correspond to columns (1) and (2). Standard errors clustered by municipality in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

registration rate between pre-existing and newly arrived Romanians corroborates our finding. Overall, our findings suggest that enfranchisement of the pre-existing Romanian population is what caused Romanian-born political representation to increase.

5.2 Prosocial Behavior

Proponents of expanding immigrant rights argue that extending the franchise to resident immigrants and ensuring more secure residency status would increase civic participation and benefit the entire community. However, the literature provides very little evidence on this topic. We test whether prosocial behavior—important in itself, but which we also take more generally as a proxy for social capital—increases when Romanian immigrants obtain EU citizenship.[20] Following the literature, we use data on organ-donation consent (from AIDO) to gauge the level of prosocial attitude and social capital.[21] The AIDO dataset contains information on those who have registered to be potential organ donors. Most importantly, it allows us to observe where individuals were born and in which municipality they resided at the time of registration.

We modify equation (1) slightly to study the level of prosocial behavior by using the individual-level data we have on registration as potential organ donors.

$$DonorConsent_{mt} = \mu_0 + \mu_1 ImmigCount_{mt} + \Big[\sum_{s=2003}^{2018} \pi_s \mathbb{1}_t\{t = s\} \Big] + \eta_m + \nu_{mt} \qquad (6)$$

The outcome variable is the number of immigrants from a given country (Romania, Albania, Morocco) who registered as organ donors in municipality m in year t. We control for the time-variant municipal count of Romanians (Albanians, Moroccans) to rule out the possibility of a mechanical increase in the number of donors following an increase in the total number of Romanians (Albanians, Moroccans) after 2007. We analyze the coefficients of the year dummies to assess whether the number of consents increased after 2007.

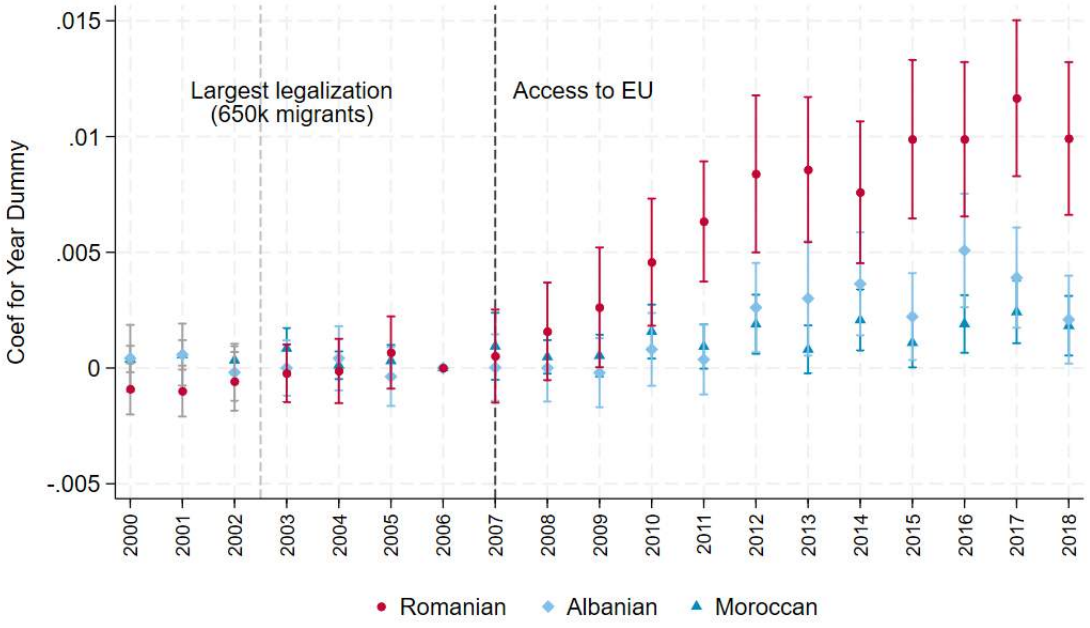
The event-study analysis is presented in Figure 10. We find a significant increase in the number of Romanian immigrants registering as potential organ donors, even after controlling for the total number of Romanian immigrants in each municipality, suggesting that the increase is not due to a mechanical effect. The coefficients for the year dummies in the specification for Romanians show a continuous increase over the first five years following

[20] According to the Oxford English Dictionary, social capital refers to *the interpersonal networks and common civic values which influence the infrastructure and economy of a particular society; the nature, extent, or value of these.*

[21] Putnam (2000) and Guiso et al. (2004) use blood donation, and Bartscher et al. (2021) use blood and organ donation along with other measures to capture social capital.

Romania's EU accession, averaging 0.003. In the subsequent five years, the coefficients stabilize at an average value of 0.009. In practice, this means that only 18 new Romanian donors registered in 2006 across Italy, compared to 137 in 2017. Although the rate remains low in absolute terms even at the end of our sample period, it is considerably higher than that of other immigrant groups. Yet it is still lower than the rate among Italians, with over 15,000 new donors in 2006 and more than 22,000 in 2017, where the native municipal population is roughly 50 to 100 times larger than that of Romanians. On the contrary, we do not observe a significant increase in the number of immigrants from either Albania or Morocco who registered as potential organ donors around 2007. This suggests that the rise in organ-donation consent is specific to Romanian-born residents and does not reflect a general trend among immigrants.

Figure 10: Event Study of Organ Donation Registration Rate



The graphs above illustrate the coefficients for year dummies in $DonorConsent_{mt} = \mu_0 + \mu_1 ImmigCount_{mt} + [\sum_{s=2003}^{2018} \pi_s \mathbb{1}_t\{t = s\}] + \eta_m + \nu_{mt}$ where standard errors are clustered by municipality. In three different regressions, the dependent variable is the number of consents given by those who were born in Romania, Albania, and Morocco respectively, in a given municipality and year. The variable $ImmigCount_{mt}$ corresponds to the number of residents in a given municipality and year who are nationals of Romania, Albania, and Morocco respectively in accordance with the dependent variable. We only have data for $ImmigCount_{mt}$ between 2003-2018. To obtain the 3 years leading up to 2003, we performed a linear extrapolation, in which negative values from the extrapolation were set to zero.

To the best of our knowledge, no specific campaign on organ donation was enacted in

Romania or targeted Romanians specifically in 2007. One possible threat to identification is that a large share of Albanians and Moroccans are Muslims, while the majority of Romanians are Orthodox Christians. If, for some reason, Muslims are less likely to donate than Orthodox Christians, and if a confounding factor increased donations precisely in 2007, this could explain the different trends we observe. To rule this out, we conduct an additional analysis for the largest groups of immigrants in Italy from Eastern European countries that have a large share of Orthodox Christians but did not join the EU, namely Russians and Ukrainians. To improve the precision of our estimates in comparing registration rates among immigrants from predominantly Orthodox countries based on EU citizenship status, we include Bulgarians, who gained EU citizenship in the same year as Romanians, in the treated group. The results, shown in Figure A.10, show once again that the effect on donation is specific to groups that obtained EU citizenship.

Figure 10 also shows the lack of any increase in consent for donations following 2002–2003, when the largest legalization program of undocumented migrants in Italian history was enacted and almost 700,000 undocumented migrants—mostly Romanians, Albanians, and Moroccans—were legalized. This suggests that the increase in the organ-donation registration rate among Romanians in 2007 is not driven by undocumented migrants gaining legal status and that the extension of voting rights may have played a very important role.

One potential concern is that controlling for the number of immigrants by group may not be sufficient. The appropriate outcome variable might instead be the share of each immigrant group that consents to organ donation, rather than the total number. However, using the share as an outcome variable could also be problematic for the same reason. That is, a large influx of Romanians after 2007 would mechanically lower the share of Romanians who are donors, as newly arrived immigrants may need time to consider and understand how to register as donors. Figure A.11 shows the results using the share rather than the number as an outcome. The figure reveals both effects. We observe a sharp drop in the share of Romanians giving consent immediately after 2007, consistent with the sharp immigrant inflow raising the denominator. However, shortly thereafter, we see a sharp increase in the share of Romanian donors, even as the denominator continues to rise. In contrast, we do not observe similar trends among Albanians or Moroccans.

Finally, we conduct our IV analysis to understand whether new arrivals or pre-existing immigrants drive our findings. The results of this exercise are reported in Table 6, using the total number of donors and the share of donors among Romanian immigrants as the first and second outcome variables, respectively. As expected, results are entirely driven by Romanians who were in Italy before 2007, while new arrivals enter with a negative sign, confirming that consent to organ donation is not a likely priority for new migrants in a

foreign country but can be boosted by increasing rights for migrants who have lived there, with limited rights, for a long period.

Table 6: Consents to Organ Donation as a Measure of Prosocial Behavior

	(1) OLS	(2) OLS	(3) 2SLS	(4) 2SLS	(5) OLS	(6) OLS	(7) 2SLS	(8) 2SLS
Dependent Variable:	Count of new Romanian donors				Share of new Romanian donors			
Romanian share in 2003	0.4088***		5.4535***		0.0058**		0.0291**	
× Post2007	(0.0988)		(0.8830)		(0.0026)		(0.0142)	
Early Romanian Share		0.1320		-0.1146		-0.0061		-0.0080
		(0.0930)		(0.3714)		(0.0038)		(0.0071)
Early Romanian Share		0.3279***		3.7325***		0.0054**		0.0230**
× Post2007		(0.0968)		(0.5599)		(0.0024)		(0.0111)
New Romanian Inflow	0.1185***	0.0916**	-6.6240***	-5.9346***	-0.0001	-0.0003	-0.0326*	-0.0319*
	(0.0390)	(0.0332)	(1.2355)	(1.0743)	(0.0014)	(0.0018)	(0.0183)	(0.0180)
Municipality FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Obs	115,887	115,897	115,887	115,897	104,686	104,696	104,686	104,696
Dep var mean	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.00014	0.00014	0.00014	0.00014

Columns (1)-(4) from the table above present a comparison of the OLS and 2SLS specifications of equation (6). The first two columns present the results from the OLS specification. Columns (3) and (4) are 2SLS results that correspond to columns (1) and (2) from the first stage specifications in Table **??**. Columns (5)-(8) table above present a comparison of the OLS and 2SLS specifications of equation (2). Columns (5) and (6) present the results from the OLS specification. Columns (7) and (8) are 2SLS results that correspond to columns (1) and (2) from the first stage specifications in Table **??**. Standard errors clustered by municipality in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

5.3 Winning Party

Barone et al. (2016) find that an increase in the share of immigrants increased the likelihood of electing a right-wing mayor in Italian municipalities. Most right-leaning parties in Italy maintained an anti-immigration stance at the national level during our observation period. Right-leaning parties that are not strictly considered anti-immigrant have been in coalitions with a right-wing party that had a strong anti-immigrant stance. In this subsection, we investigate whether enfranchising the largest immigrant community balances out the increase in support for a right-wing mayoral candidate documented by Barone et al. (2016). We analyze the ideology of the winning party in municipal elections around the 2007 accession, using Equation 1. As mentioned in Section 2.3, the mayor, vice mayor, and councilors are chosen in municipal elections. Candidates can be elected as councilors in opposition parties, but the majority of the councilors and the mayor come from the winning party or coalition. Thus, investigating the winning party tells us how the municipality voted in general and who gained control over the municipal government.

We categorize the parties into five different types: right-leaning, centrist, left-leaning, civic, and Five Star Movement. To classify the parties into these five categories, we analyze the name of the party and confirm using the party's Wikipedia page. We classify a party as left-leaning when (1) the term *Left (Sinistra)* appears in the name, (2) the party participates in a coalition with a party that has traditionally been categorized as left-leaning, such as the Democratic Party (Partito Democratico), or (3) the party is categorized as left-leaning by Wikipedia. Similarly, we classify a party as right-leaning when (1) the term *Right (Destra)* appears in the name, (2) the party participates in a coalition with a party that has traditionally been categorized as right-leaning, such as Forza Italia or National Alliance (Alleanza Nazionale), or (3) the party is categorized as right-leaning by Wikipedia. The centrist parties are those that are not in a coalition with any parties classified as left- or right-leaning and contain the term *Center (Centro)*, such as the Union of the Center (Unione di Centro). Finally, a party is considered civic if it is not in a coalition with any party classified as left- or right-leaning and contains either the word *Civic (Civico)* or *Independent (Indipendente)*.

Figure 11 shows that the likelihood of a right-leaning party winning in municipal elections increases over time in municipalities that are home to more immigrants from any of the three largest immigrant communities—Romanian, Albanian, or Moroccan. Since the pattern is very similar across all three groups, even though Romanians gained voting rights and the other two groups do not, this suggests that the enfranchisement of Romanians in itself did not cause the ideology of the winning party to change. Instead, the presence of any immigrant community, whether it had the franchise or not, played a greater role. We observe a slight decrease in the likelihood of civic parties winning for a few years after 2007, but the likelihood returns to its previous level soon after. We do not observe any significant and consistent patterns for the other types of parties.

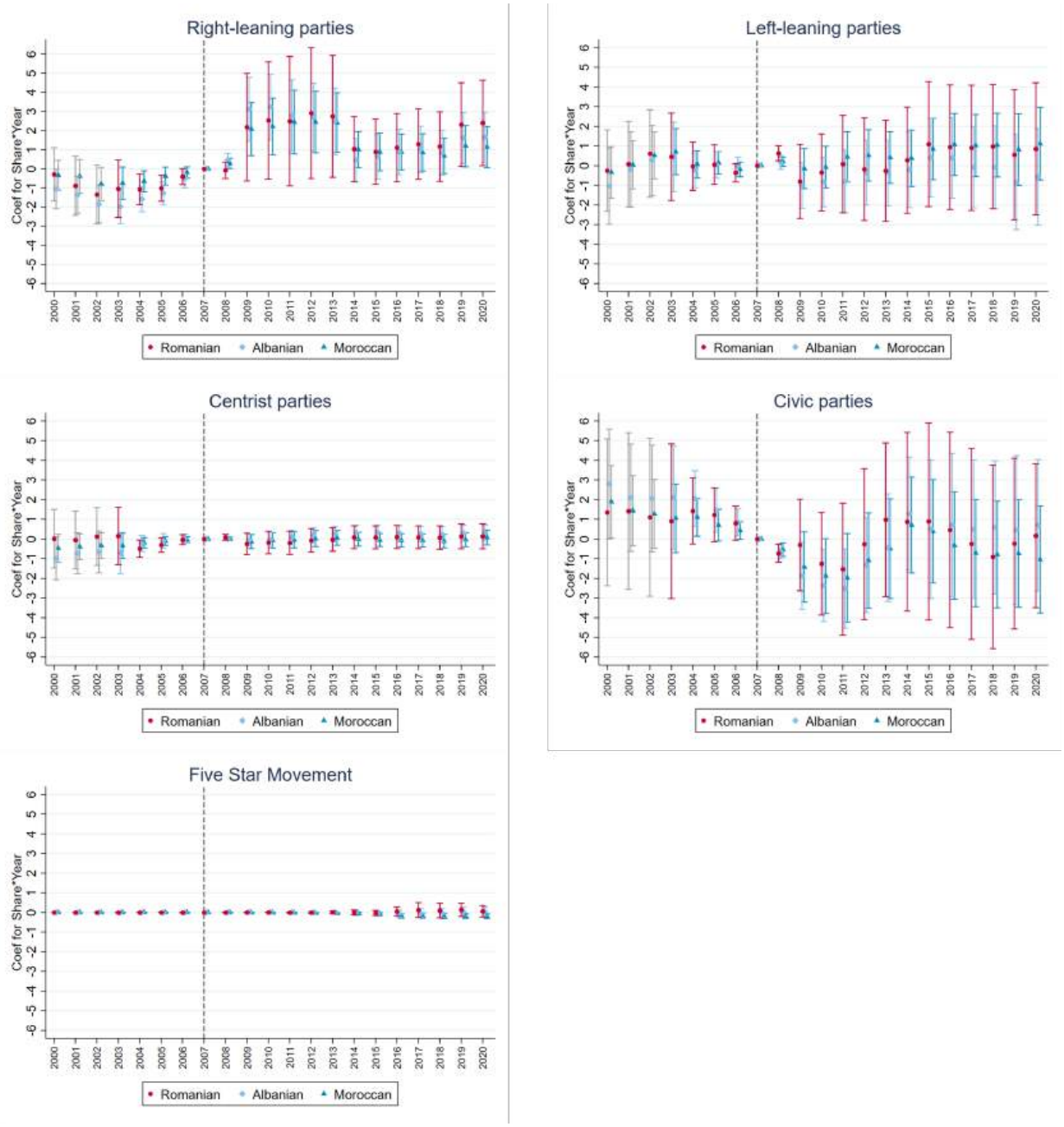
5.4 Local Public Finance

Research studying women's suffrage and the U.S. Voting Rights Act has found a significant change in public finance after the franchise was extended to a new subset of the population.[22] We examine whether there are any distinct patterns in local public finance for municipalities with more Romanians after their rights expanded. First, we look at the evolution of the property tax and waste tax as shares of total revenue for each municipality to see whether the tax burden on homeowners changes.[23] Figure A.12 shows an increase in the property tax

[22]See Lott and Kenny (1999), Abrams and Settle (1999), Washington (2008), Aidt and Dallal (2008), Funk and Gathmann (2015), Cascio and Shenhav (2020), and Kose et al. (2020) for how women's suffrage led to a change in budget allocation. See Cascio and Washington (2014) for how the U.S. Voting Rights Act influenced government transfers.

[23]In 2016, 20 percent of foreigners owned a house compared to 77 percent of Italians.

Figure 11: Event Study of Winning Parties/Coalitions



The graphs above plot the coefficients from the event study for the interaction terms between the immigrant share of interest fixed at its 2003 level and year dummies. The red dot refers to the regression in which the immigrant share of interest is the Romanian share whereas the light blue diamond and the blue triangle correspond to separate regressions where the immigrant share of interest is the Albanian and Moroccan share, respectively. The dependent variable is an indicator variable equal to 1 when the winning party in the municipal election has a political ideology mentioned in the title of each graph and 0 otherwise. The regression separately controls for municipality and year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

and a decrease in the waste tax over time in municipalities with more Romanians compared to those with fewer. However, we do not see any statistical difference between municipalities with more Romanians and those with more Albanians or Moroccans. Consequently, we conclude that the local tax-revenue composition is unaffected by extending voting rights to Romanian immigrants.

We then investigate the breakdown of expenditure. In Figure A.13, we present an event-study analysis of the expenditure shares of five main categories of local expenditure: education, public housing, public security, social programs, and transportation. Once again, we do not observe a statistical difference between municipalities with more Romanians and those with more Albanians or Moroccans. We find that in municipalities with a large presence of at least one of the three immigrant communities, the expenditure share on public security increases over time and the expenditure share on social programs decreases. This finding is consistent with the increase in the likelihood of a right-leaning party or coalition winning the municipal election when there is a large presence of any of the three immigrant communities considered.

6 Discussion

Romania's accession to the European Union is, to our knowledge, the only shock that occurred in 2007 that specifically and differentially affected Romanian (and Bulgarian) migrants living in Italy. We are thus confident that our identification strategies correctly capture this event. However, the event inherently involves several simultaneous changes that are challenging to disentangle. These changes include the enfranchisement of Romanians for municipal elections, more secure and easily obtained residency status, free movement of labor, and the legalization of Romanian immigrants. The expansion of these rights led to an increase in the number of Romanians migrating to Italy. In this section, we discuss how we address and disentangle the multiple confounding events in our analyses.

The legalization of Romanian immigrants is one potential channel that could affect our results. However, 2007 was not the first wave of legalization of Romanian migrants. As discussed above, Italy legalized a large share of its undocumented migrant population in 2003, accounting for nearly 700,000 individuals, predominantly Romanians, Albanians, and Moroccans. The fact that none of our results show any evidence of a jump in 2003, especially in Figure A.6 and Figure 10, suggests that legalization did not play a major role in fostering representation and prosocial behavior. Similarly, the fact that our results are entirely driven by the pre-existing Romanian population, while previously undocumented migrants legalized via EU citizenship would be captured in new arrivals, further suggests that our findings are

not driven by legalization.

Second, the large influx of Romanians following 2007 may raise identification concerns and complicate the interpretation of the results. This is because the share of newly arrived Romanians could correlate with that of pre-existing Romanians. Our IV approach ensures that the results are driven by pre-existing Romanian migrants rather than by the new, potentially differently selected, Romanian migrants.

Third, free movement of labor could have dramatically affected the labor market for Romanians. The gradual process of Romania's EU accession alleviates some of our concerns, since the labor market restrictions for Romanians in Italy were not fully lifted until January 1, 2012. Instead, we observe effects on representation and prosocial behavior beginning in 2009 at the latest. Table A.2 shows significant evidence of changes in Romanian employment only for a few sectors. The largest change is the increase in the number of Romanians seeking a job, which seems inconsistent with our results. Since the municipal councilor's position is virtually unpaid and undemanding in terms of time, it is very unlikely that the higher unemployment rate among newly arrived Romanians advantages them in getting elected. Similarly, higher unemployment seems unable to explain the increase in social capital.

Finally, we are unable to fully disentangle the effects of enfranchisement from those of more secure residency rights and, more generally, the sense of "feeling more European". When considering the outcome of municipal representation, it seems clear that enfranchisement is the most important and necessary driver. At the same time, the fact that pre-existing migrants—who already had residency rights—drive the results for both representation and prosocial behavior suggests that residency rights may play a minor role. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that the perception of having more secure residency, independent of job stability, and a stronger sense of belonging by feeling part of the EU community could still be an important factor, particularly for prosocial behavior.

7 Conclusion

We study how expanding immigrants' political and residency rights through the acquisition of EU citizenship affects political representation, prosocial behavior, the political orientation of the winning party, and local public finances. Exploiting Romania's accession to the European Union in 2007, we find that the likelihood of electing a Romanian-born councilor increases in municipalities with a larger share of Romanian immigrants. The effect is specific to Romanians, as we see no comparable effects among Albanians or Moroccans, the second and third largest immigrant communities in Italy.

To explore the underlying mechanisms, we first show that the supply of Romanian can-

didates increased, but not differentially more than in one of our main comparison groups, Albanians. We then examine competitive elections and find that municipalities expecting a tight race are even more likely to elect a Romanian-born councilor. This suggests that political parties are more inclined to nominate minority candidates when anticipating a close contest in order to capture the newly enfranchised voters. Indeed, we find evidence of increased voter turnout among Romanians. Using an Instrumental Variables approach, we find that this effect is driven by the pre-existing Romanian population, rather than by newly arrived Romanians.

The impact of expanding immigrants' rights extends beyond political outcomes. Specifically, we observe an increase in prosocial behavior, proxied by consent rates for organ donation, among Romanians after their country's EU accession. The IV analysis shows this is also driven by Romanians who arrived before 2007.

Regarding electoral outcomes and public finance patterns, we find no significant differences between municipalities with Romanian residents and those with Albanian and Moroccan communities, our comparison groups. In all municipalities with substantial immigrant populations, a higher share of immigrants is associated with a greater likelihood of a right-leaning party victory, increased spending on public security, and reduced spending on social programs. We believe that future research should further investigate how the political preferences of newly enfranchised groups may differ from those of communities without voting rights and study the effects on public spending that more directly target different ethnic communities.

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Online Appendix

Table A.1: Characteristic Comparison Between Pre-existing and Newly Arrived Romanians

Arrival in Italy:	2004-2006	2007-2010	Difference
16-24	0.1044	0.2158	0.1113***
25-34	0.3746	0.3710	-0.0037
35-44	0.3654	0.2885	-0.0768**
45+	0.1556	0.1247	-0.0309
Married	0.6058	0.4927	-0.1131***
Single	0.1438	0.2761	0.1323***
Living with Partner	0.1266	0.1171	-.0095
Divorced	0.1048	0.0903	-0.0145
Widowed	0.0191	0.0239	0.0047
Has dependent children	0.5031	0.4193	-0.0838**
Primary	0.0352	0.0694	0.0342**
Vocational	0.2651	0.2921	0.0268
Secondary	0.4611	0.4209	-0.0405
College	0.1149	0.0775	-0.0375*
Graduate Degree	0.1237	0.1401	0.0162
Less than 400 EUR	0.0202	0.0378	0.0176
401-500 EUR	0.0292	0.0359	0.0067
501-600 EUR	0.0398	0.0580	0.0182
601-700 EUR	0.0401	0.0804	0.0403**
701-800 EUR	0.0994	0.1340	0.0346
801-900 EUR	0.1152	0.0696	-0.0457*
901-1000 EUR	0.1136	0.1530	0.0394
1001-1200 EUR	0.1903	0.1916	0.0013
1201-1500 EUR	0.2205	0.1480	-0.0725**
1501-2000 EUR	0.0874	0.0604	-0.0270
Above 2000 EUR	0.0442	0.0314	-0.0128
Registered to Vote	0.2389	0.0536	-0.1853***

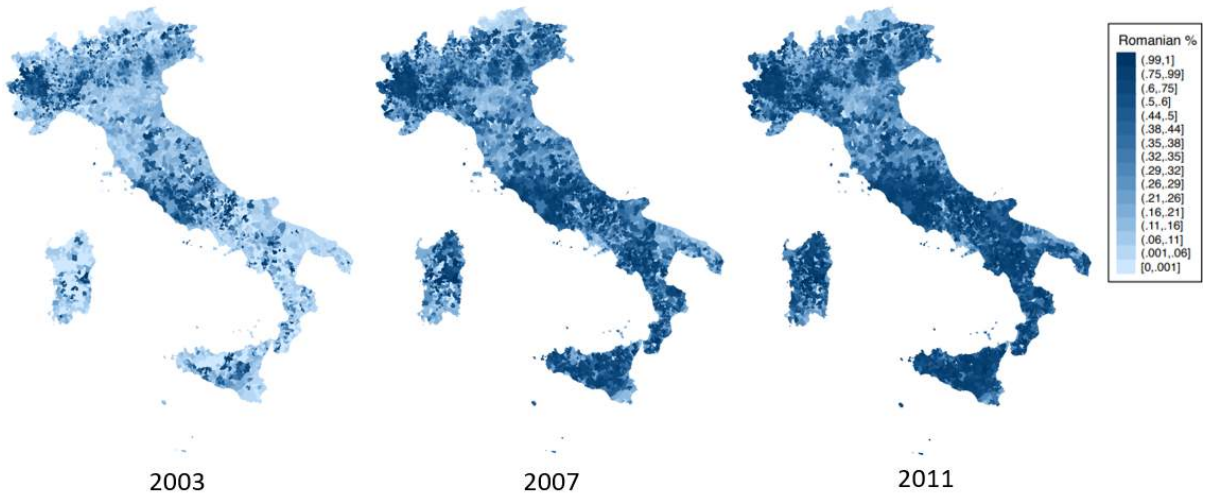
The table compares the characteristics of Romanian migrants who arrived in Italy between 2004–2006 and those who arrived between 2007–2010, after Romania's accession to the EU. The data come from the a WIIW survey of Romanian migrants in major Itailan cities (Milan, Turin and Rome) from before and after the EU Accession. We apply the national weights provided by WIIW to present nationally representative statistics.

Table A.2: Employment Share of Romanian Migrants by Sector

Arrival in Italy:	2004-2006	2007-2010	Difference
Agriculture, hunting, and forestry	0.0110	0.0144	0.0073
Construction	0.2019	0.2429	0.0410
Domestic services for families	0.1372	0.1575	0.0204
Education	0.0053	0	-0.0053
Financial intermediaries	0.0042	0	-0.0042
Healthcare and other social services	0.0476	0.0424	-0.0052
Hotels and restaurants	0.0618	0.0328	-0.0290**
Manufacturing	0.1070	0.0570	-0.0500***
Other public social services	0.0138	0.0140	0.0002
Public administration and defense	0.0004	0	-0.0004
Professional and entrepreneurial activities	0.0625	0.0453	-0.0171
Transportation and distribution	0.0373	0.0472	0.0099
Wholesale and retail trade	0.2250	0.1867	-0.0383
Staying at home or looking after children	0.0197	0.0332	0.01352
Student	0.0273	0.0410	0.0137
Looking for work	0.0102	0.0716	0.0614***
Other	0.0279	0.0141	-0.0138

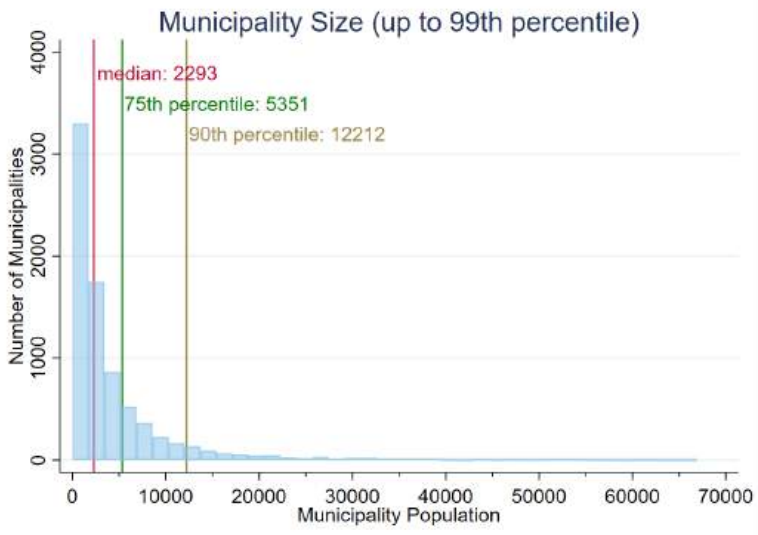
The table displays the employment share of Romanian migrants by sector divided into two groups—Romanian migrants that arrived in Italy during 2004-2006 and those that arrived during 2007-2011, which is after Romania's accession to the EU. The statistics come from the survey on Romanian migrants in large Italian cities (Milan, Turin and Rome) before and after the EU Accession, provided by WIIW. We use the national weights given by WIIW for this table to show the nationally representative characteristics of Romanian migrants.

Figure A.1: Share of Romanians Among Immigrants by Municipality and Year



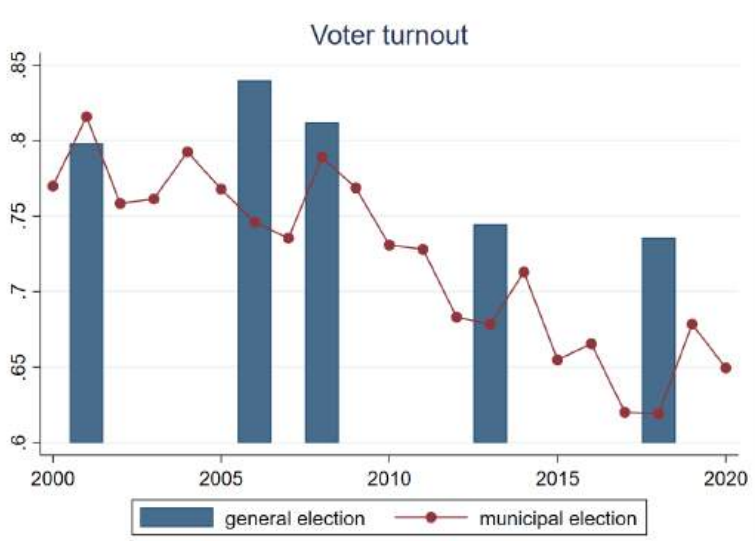
The maps above display the number of Romanians as a fraction of total immigrants within a given municipality in years 2003, 2007, and 2011 respectively.

Figure A.2: Distribution of Municipality Population



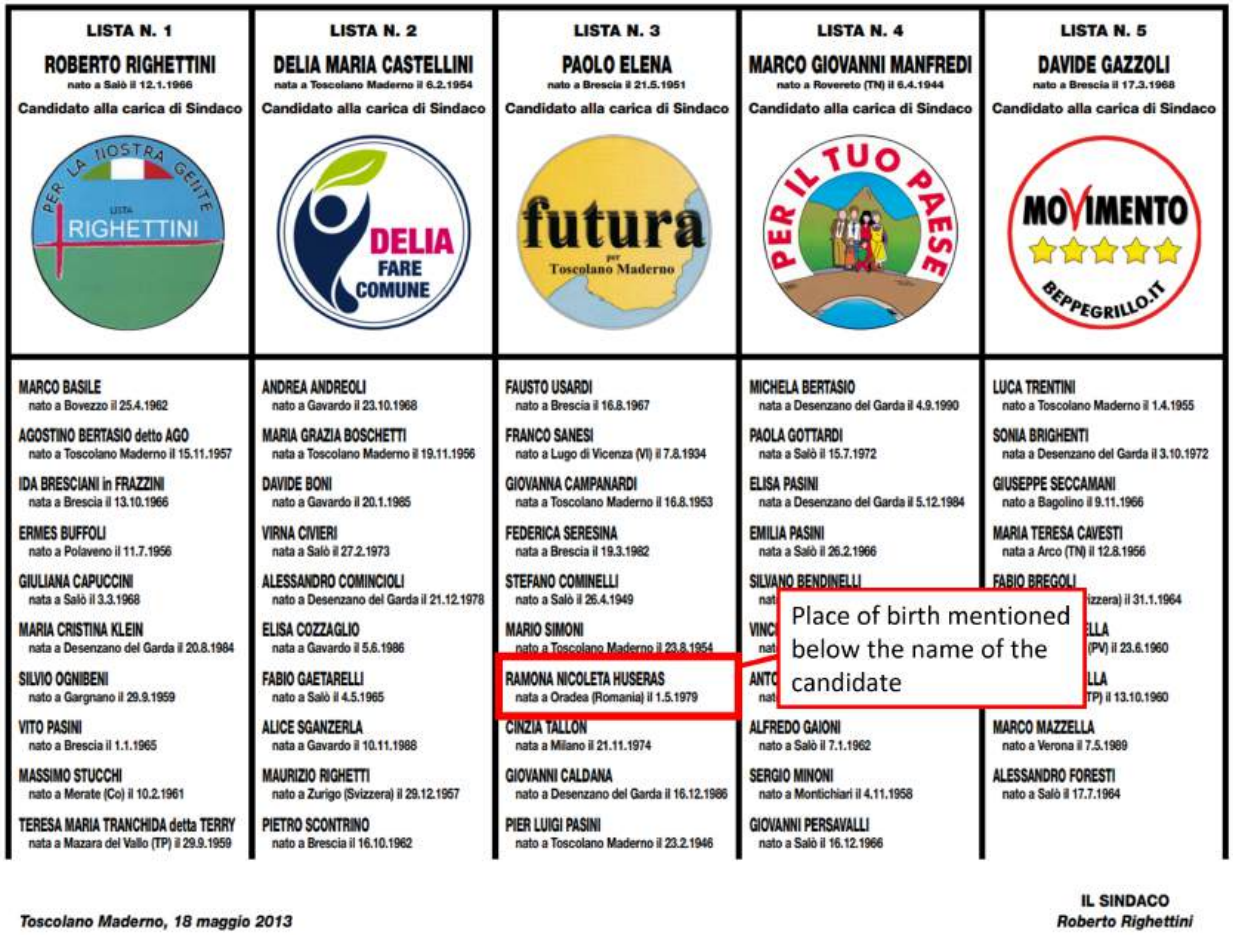
The graph above shows the distribution of municipality population for all municipalities up to the 99th percentile by population. The median municipality has 2,293 residents. (Source: 2001 Italian Census)

Figure A.3: Turnout for General vs. Municipal Elections in Italy



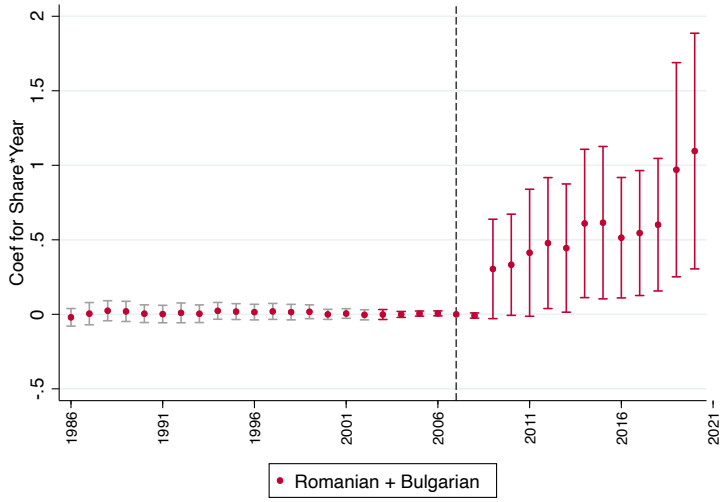
The graph above compares the turnout for general vs. municipal elections in Italy. (Source: Ministry of Interior of Italy)

Figure A.4: Roster of Candidates in a Municipal Election



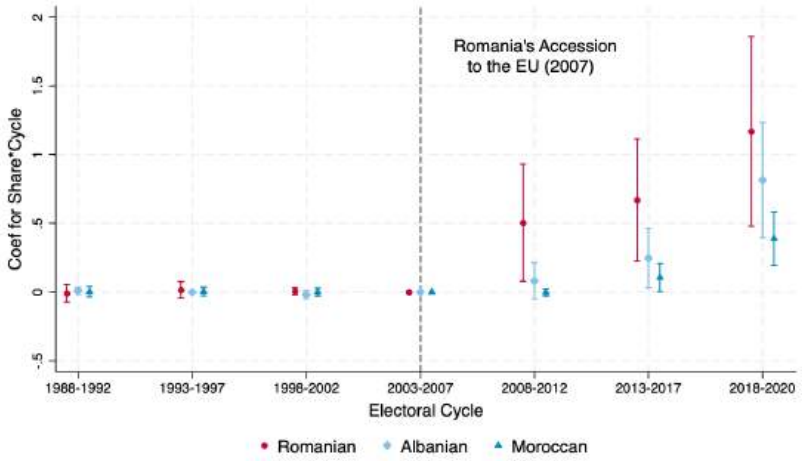
The figure shows an example roster from a municipal election in Italy. The roster contains the name, birthplace, and date of birth of all candidates, as well as their party affiliation.

Figure A.5: Event Study for Combined Political Representation of Romanians and Bulgarians with Romanian and Bulgarian Combined Share Fixed at its 2003 Level



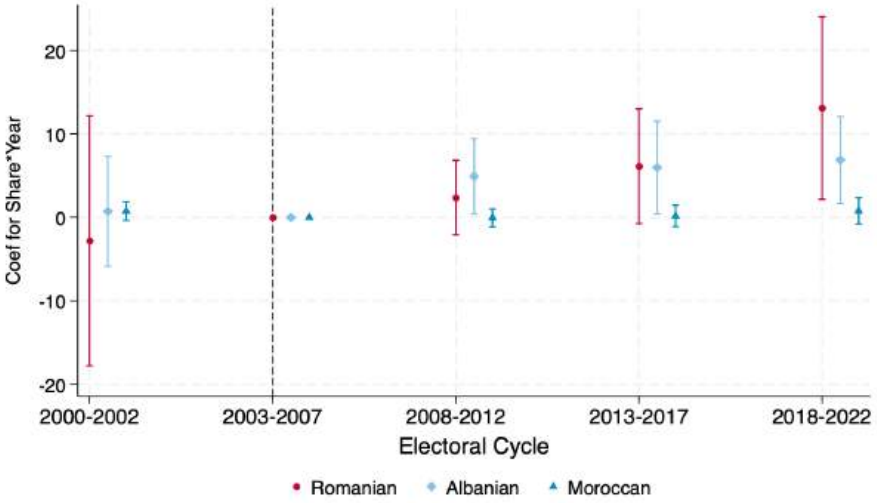
Same as Figure 3 but now the outcome is chance of electing a Romanian or Bulgarian politician on the sum of Romanian and Bulgarian share of the population

Figure A.6: Event Study for Political Representation with immigrant Share Fixed at its 2003 Level Collapsed to Electoral Cycles



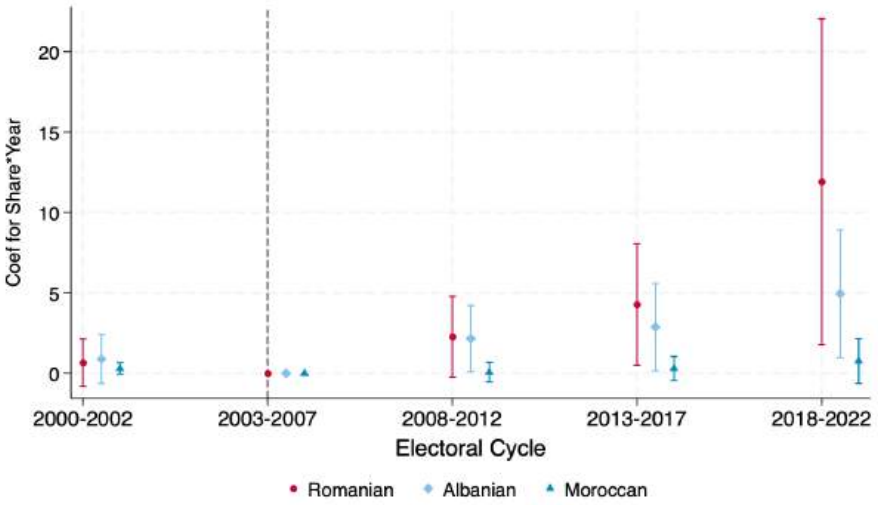
The graph above plots the coefficients from the event study where the years are collapsed to electoral cycles. The plotted coefficients are for the interaction terms between Romanian/Albanian/Moroccan share fixed at its 2003 level and cycle dummies. The dependent variable is an indicator variable equal to 1 when the given municipality has a Romanian/Albanian/Moroccan-born councilor in the given year and 0 otherwise. The regression separately controls for municipality and year fixed effect respectively. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Figure A.7: Event Study for *number* of immigrant candidates and immigrant share fixed at its 2003 Level (Municipality Fixed Effect)



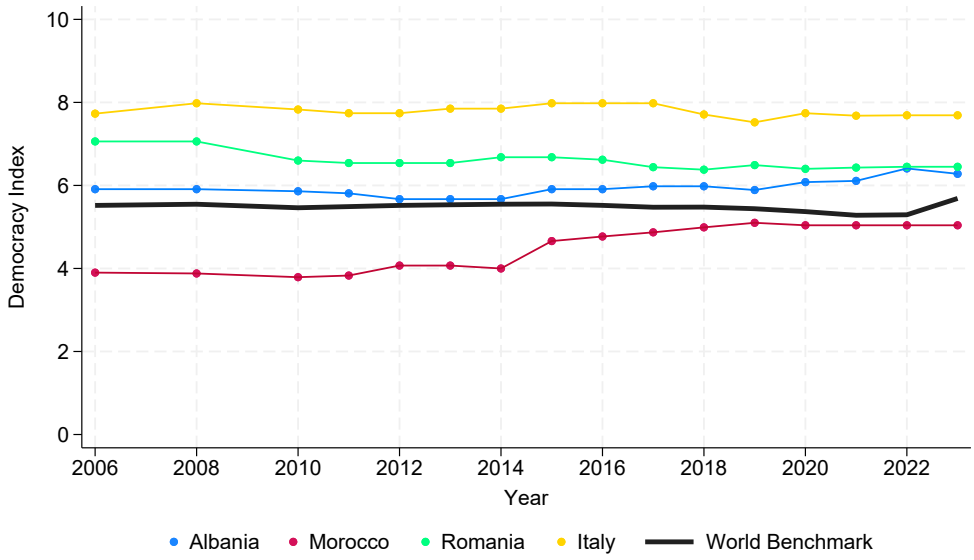
The graph above plots the coefficients from the event study where the years are collapsed to the corresponding electoral cycles. The plotted coefficients are for the interaction terms between Immigrants' share fixed at its 2003 level and cycle dummies. The dependent variable is the total number of Romanian-born, Albanian-born or Moroccan-born candidates in the given year. The regression separately controls for municipality and year fixed effect respectively. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level. Sample: 333 municipalities for which we have place of birth.

Figure A.8: Event Study for probability of having an immigrant candidate and immigrant share fixed at its 2003 Level (Municipality Fixed Effect) With Trentino-Alto Adige



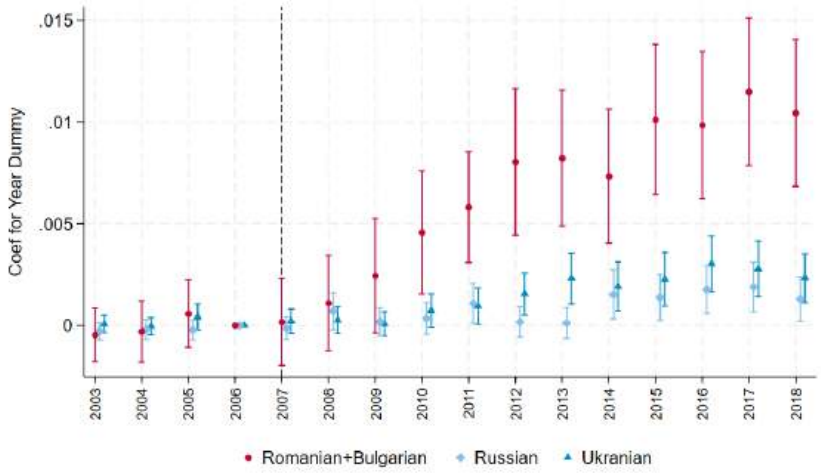
The graph above plots the coefficients from the event study where the years are collapsed to the corresponding electoral cycles. The plotted coefficients are for the interaction terms between Immigrants' share fixed at its 2003 level and cycle dummies. The dependent variable is an indicator variable equal to 1 when the given municipality has a Romanian-born, Albanian-born or Moroccan-born candidate in the given year and 0 otherwise. The regression separately controls for municipality and year fixed effect respectively. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level. Sample: 333 municipalities for which we have place of birth plus all the 343 municipalities of Trentino and Alto-Adige, for which we have only names. We assign Romanian origin (but not Albanian or Moroccan) based on names using Ethnea as discussed in Footnote 9.

Figure A.9: Democracy Index



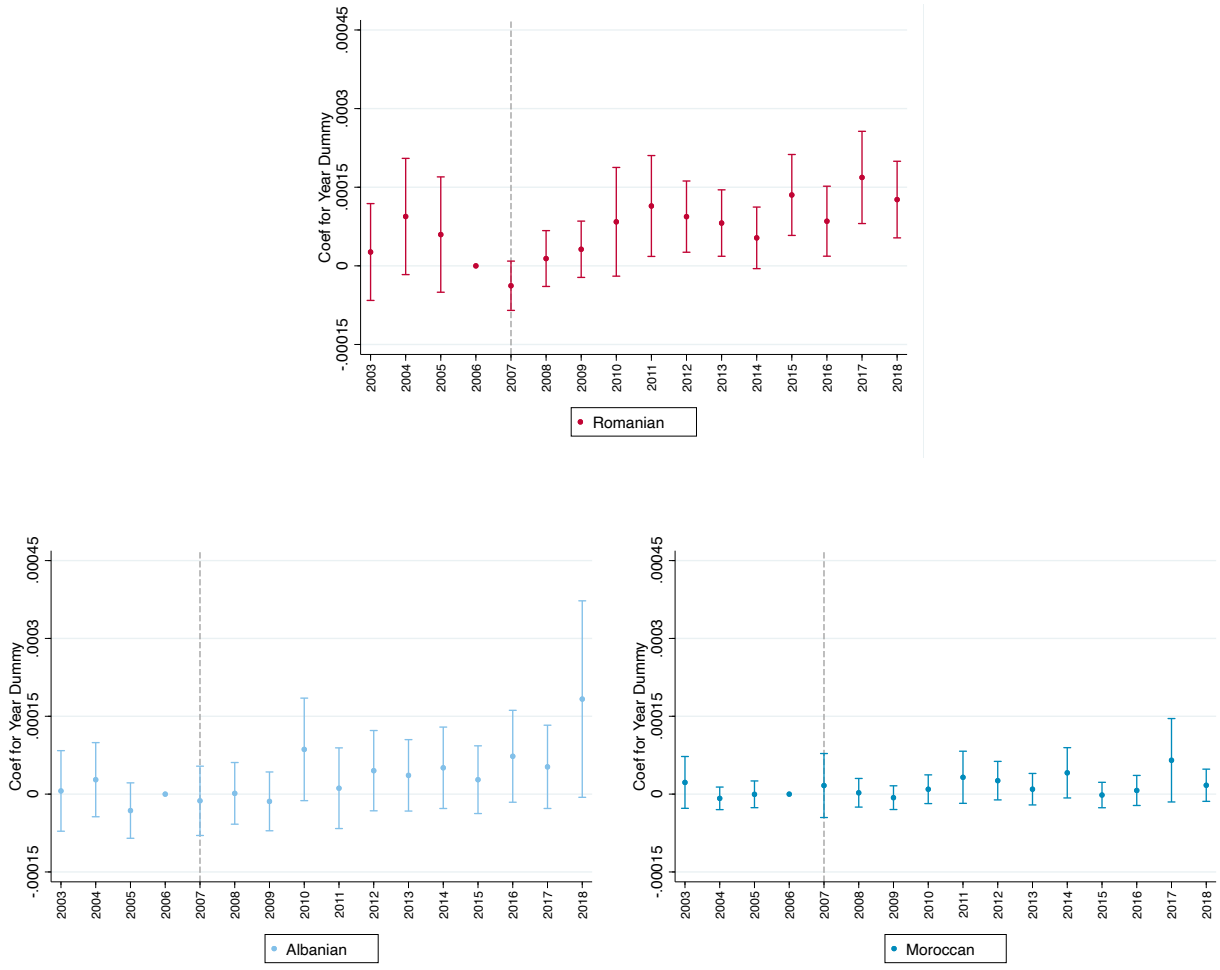
Source: Economist Intelligence Unit (2006-2023) – processed by Our World in Data
The figure shows the democracy index for the countries of interest. The first index was calculated in 2006, with reports published biennially until 2010 and annually thereafter.

Figure A.10: Comparison of Consent Rate Among Romanian and Bulgarian Immigrants vs. Immigrants from Largest Christian Orthodox Countries



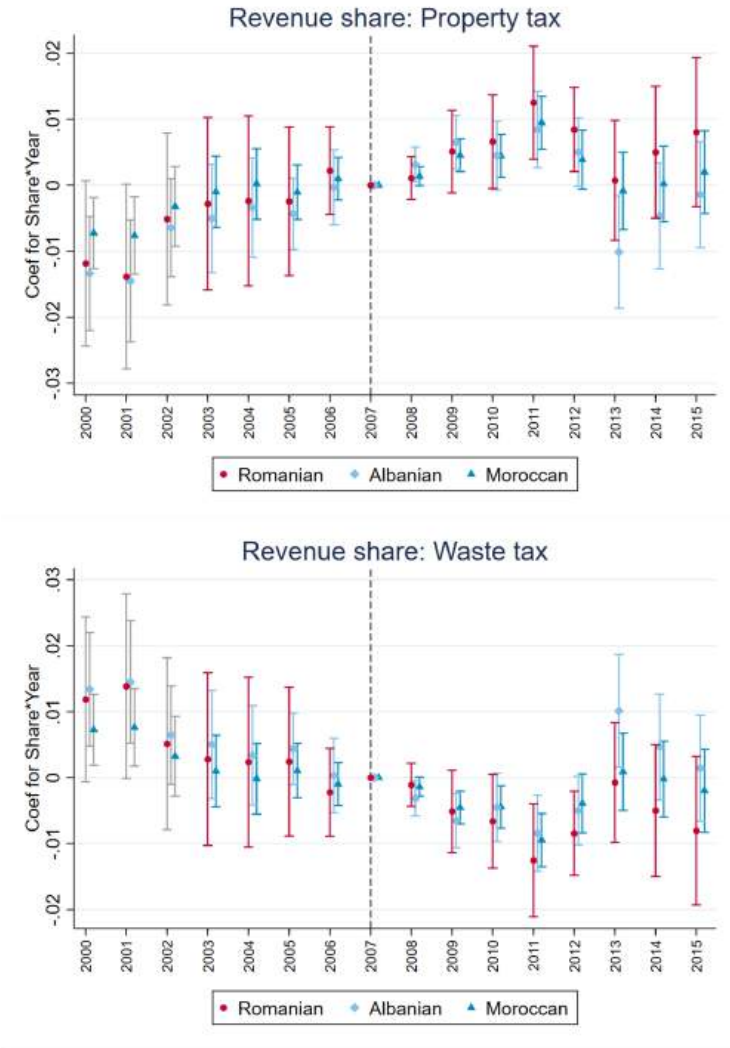
Same as Figure 10, but coefficients for Romanian or Bulgarians, Russians, Ukrainians. No extrapolated data, real data only

Figure A.11: Share by group giving consent to organ donations



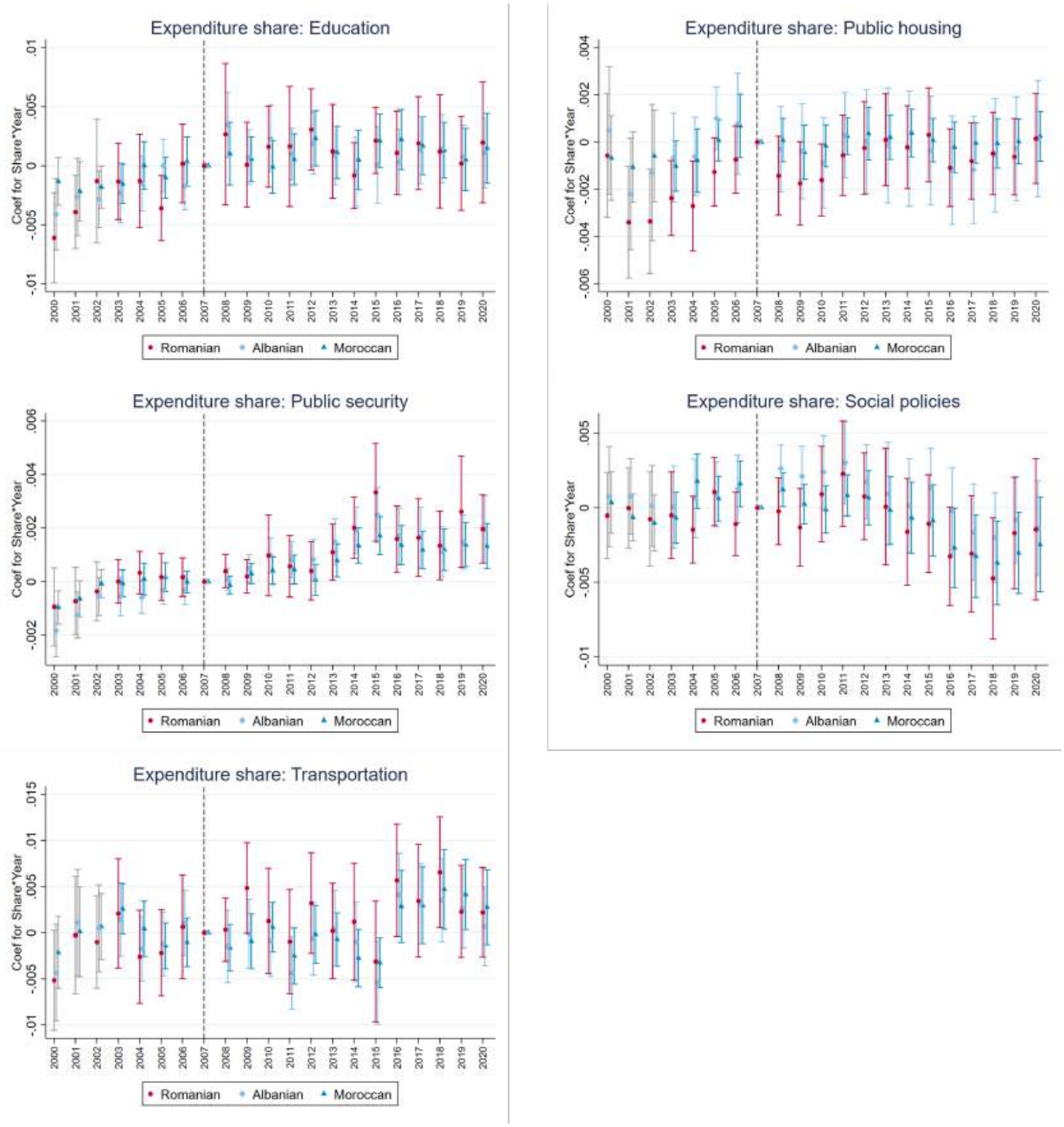
The table replicates Figure 10 but the outcome is now the share of the immigrant population (by place of birth) giving consent to organ donation.

Figure A.12: Local Tax Revenue Composition



The graphs above plot the coefficients from the event study for the interaction terms between the immigrant share of interest fixed at its 2003 level and year dummies. The red dot refers to the regression in which the immigrant share of interest is Romanian share whereas the light blue diamond and the blue triangle correspond to separate regressions where the immigrant share of interest is Albanian and Moroccan share respectively. The dependent variable is the tax collection corresponding to the title of the graph as a share of municipal government revenue. The regression separately controls for municipality and year fixed effect respectively. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Figure A.13: Local Expenditure Breakdown



The graphs above plot the coefficients from the event study for the interaction terms between the immigrant share of interest fixed at its 2003 level and year dummies. The red dot refers to the regression in which the immigrant share of interest is Romanian share whereas the light blue diamond and the blue triangle correspond to separate regressions where the immigrant share of interest is Albanian and Moroccan share respectively. The dependent variable is the level of spending corresponding to the title of the graph as a share of municipal government total expenditure. The regression separately controls for municipality and year fixed effect respectively. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.