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Do we need them? When immigrant communities are perceived as indispensable to national identity or functioning of the host society

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### Abstract

This study proposed a new perspective to look at the consequences of the formation of immigrant communities in globalized societies, by investigating the impact of two forms of group indispensability on majority attitudes towards immigrants. Specifically, it explored whether perceived indispensability of different immigrant groups to the national identity and their contributions to the functioning of the host society are related to the development of more positive attitudes towards them. We also explored whether such effects would be mediated by the inclusion of immigrants within the national common identity and whether these effects would be stronger among host country members with a stronger civic than ethnic conception of national citizenship. Results supported these predictions among a sample of native Portuguese citizens (N=118). As predicted, these effects were driven by perceptions of different types of indispensability for three immigrant groups in Portugal, who differed in their historical relations with the host society.

**Keywords:** indispensability, immigrants, common identity, citizenship

*U.S. desperately needs immigrants and a strategy to get the right ones (Forbes, 2012)*

In 2013 the International Organization for Migration (2013) showed that the number of international migrants worldwide reached 232 million and argued that as globalization increased, migration became one of the key challenges of the 21st century (International Organization for Migration, 2013). There is some consensus that globalization (and its consequent changes in global production, innovation and technology) is a significant force increasing the demand for the international movement of workers. Indeed, world migration trends are changing and new immigrant communities are becoming increasingly diverse and fluid, as people move with greater frequency over greater distances. These changes in migration patterns are found in several European countries that traditionally have been culturally and ethnically homogeneous. With globalization these countries (e. g., Italy, Germany) are becoming increasingly diverse. This increased diversity poses several challenges to host societies, including how to successfully integrate culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse migrants into the host society, and how to address questions about their rights to citizenship.

Social psychological research shows variability in reactions to the increased flow of people from foreign cultures, depending upon, for example, a citizen's political ideology (Schwartz, Vignoles, Brown, & Zagefka, 2014), the perceived threat to the national identity (Louis, Esses, & Lalonde, 2013) and the degree of perceived competition for resources posed by immigrants (Esses, Brochu, & Dickson, 2012). Furthermore, research about the consequences of integrating immigrant communities has focused on either a) the

perspective of immigrants, such as how acculturation orientations relate to their psychological well-being (e.g., Celenk & van de Vijver, 2014), or b) the perspective of the host society, such as their perceptions of threat posed the increased flow of immigrants (e.g., Louis et al., 2013).

The current study extends previous research by proposing a new theoretical lens to look at the consequences of the formation of new immigrant communities in globalized societies, through which these immigrant groups may be seen to offer important contributions to society. Specifically, the present research contributes to a novel understanding of host citizens' reactions to immigrants focusing on immigrants' functional indispensability (as per Guerra, António, Deegan, & Gaertner, 2013: do they contribute indispensably to our functioning? ), as well as their identity indispensability (as per Verkuyten, Martinovic, & Smeekes, 2014: are they part of us?).

We propose that, with globalization, newly formed immigrant communities may be less likely to be regarded as devalued, resource-draining enclaves within host societies. Rather, with globalization, these migrant communities have the opportunity to earn host country citizens' respect and encouragement for inclusion upon recognition that they contribute indispensably to the host society's functional (e. g., economic) well-being or national identity. Further, we explore whether these perceptions of immigrants both as significant contributors to the betterment of society and to the definition of the national identity, are associated with more positive attitudes towards them. Further we explore how the strength of this association varies depending on host citizens' inclusive and exclusive conceptions of national identity of who qualifies for national citizenship.

**Common identities and perceived indispensability: how much do *We* need*****Them***

Research consistently shows that recategorizing ingroup and outgroup members as either one single group or two subgroups in the same team (i.e., dual-identity) is related to reduced bias and more positive outgroup orientations (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2009). The predictions of the common ingroup identity model (CIIM) were recently examined among majority and minority groups specifically exploring the new concept of relative ingroup indispensability, that is, whether subgroups consider themselves to be an indispensable, complementary part of the superordinate category. Results revealed that, in line with CIIM, dual-identification was related to more positive outgroup attitudes (Ng Tseung-Wong, & Verkuyten, 2010; Verkuyten & Khan, 2012). However, relative *ingroup* indispensability was associated with higher bias for both majority and minority groups (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010). Nonetheless, perceived ingroup indispensability is also associated with positive intergroup outcomes, e.g., desire of immigrants to have contact with host country citizens.

Recent research found that among immigrants perceived ingroup indispensability to the national identity and to the functioning of the host society was associated with integrationist attitudes, and this effect was mediated by the adoption of one-group representations (Guerra et al., 2013). Also suggestive of the positive consequences of perceived outgroup indispensability, research conducted with native Dutch majority found that perceiving immigrants as indispensable for the national category was associated with higher acceptance of immigrants' cultural rights, and this effect was mediated by increased dual-identity representations and decreased ingroup-centric views (Verkuyten et al., 2014).

***We need Them, but for different reasons: identity and functional indispensability.***

Previous research on indispensability focused on category (i.e., identity) indispensability, that is, the extent to which groups within a superordinate category are perceived to be complementary parts necessary for defining the national social identity (Ng Tseung-Wong, & Verkuyten, 2010; Verkuyten et al., 2014). However, specifically in the case of inter-ethnic contexts, immigrants can be regarded as being to some degree indispensable or not, with regard to the economic and social contributions they make to the host society (Guerra et al., 2013). Social psychology has a long tradition of studying functional relations between groups, rooted in Sherif's pioneering work on superordinate goals and realistic conflict theory (Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961), and, within groups, in work on group motivation gains (Weber & Hertel, 2007).

We relied on the definition of social indispensability as the product of one's instrumentality and effort toward the group outcome (Hertel, Kerr, & Messé, 2000; Weber & Hertel, 2007) to propose a new form, functional indispensability, that reflects the perceived instrumentality of a group's effort for a superordinate outcome. Thus, groups can be regarded as indispensable in a functionally advantageous way as contributing to the society's economy without necessarily being perceived to be an important, needed part of the host society's national identity. Importantly, we propose that different groups, depending on the socio-structural and historical relations with the host society, can be seen as indispensable in different ways. Inspired by research on the social structural and functional approaches of stereotypes (Alexander, Brewer, & Herrmann, 1999; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002), we propose that perceived indispensability is shaped, in the same way as is the content of social stereotypes, by the nature of the intergroup context. We

suggest that immigrants are not generally perceived as being dispensable or indispensable; instead different immigrant groups can be perceived as being indispensable for different reasons that, in part, reflect their functional contributions or historical relations with the host society. Previous research supports this idea by revealing that specific immigrant nationalities in America are differentiated from each other, that is, Asians being perceived uniquely high in competence, whereas Italians uniquely high in warmth (Lee & Fiske, 2006).

The role of perceived indispensability of groups to a common superordinate identity is a relatively novel approach to understanding the impact of common identities on intergroup relations. Research reveals that perceptions of relative *ingroup* indispensability can be a mechanism for claiming ingroup superiority and exceptionalism (Ng Tseung-Wong, & Verkuyten, 2010; Verkuyten & Khan, 2012), whereas perceived *outgroup* indispensability reflects more valuable views of an outgroup which can foster more positive outgroup attitudes and more harmonious intergroup relations (Verkuyten et al., 2014)

We propose that different types of indispensability are helpful to capture the complexity of multi-ethnic societies resulting from globalization and the increased flow of international migrants. However, as we explain below, the positive intergroup consequences of perceived outgroup indispensability are limited to those citizens who endorse civic (i. e., more inclusive) definitions of who can and who cannot be regarded officially as citizens.

**Whether We need Them: depends on how inclusive We are.** The political science literature has traditionally differentiated between ethnic, civic and more recently cultural conceptions of national identity (Reijserse, Van Acker, Vanbeselaere, Phalet, & Duriez,



2012; Smith, 1991). The ethnic conception of national identity defines citizenship as based on blood ties and shared ancestry. This excludes from the national category all the non-dominant ethnic groups who do not have ancestors from the dominant group in a given society. The civic, more inclusive, conception of national identity, defines citizenship based on living within the national territory, following societal rules and laws, endorsement of equal political rights, and active participation and contribution to the society (Reijerse et al., 2012). Research showed that ethnic conceptualizations of the national identity are associated with more negative attitudes towards immigrants (Pehrson, Brown, & Zagefka, 2009; Pehrson, Vignoles, & Brown, 2009; Reijerse et al., 2012), while civic representations are related to prosocial orientations toward immigrants (Wakefield et al., 2011) and to more positive attitudes toward them (Reijerse et al., 2012; Yogeewaran & Dasgupta, 2014).

We propose that these conceptions specifically affect the relations between host country citizens and immigrant groups by functioning as a boundary condition for the positive effects of perceived indispensability on intergroup relations. We suggest that endorsing inclusive conceptions of the national identity is a necessary condition for citizens to perceive immigrants as indispensable because civic conceptions rely on valuing the active participation and contribution of groups to societies, rather than as a threat to national identity or host citizens.

### **Present research**

This study adds to the literature in several ways: a) by exploring if different immigrant groups who differ in their historical relations with the host society are perceived to be indispensable in different ways, that is, to the national identity (Verkuyten, et al., 2014) but also to the functioning of the host society (Guerra, et al., 2013), thereby

improving attitudes towards them; b) by identifying the mechanisms that underlie the positive effects of perceived outgroup indispensability, specifically examining if common or dual-identities mediate these effects; and c) by exploring if civic (vs ethnic) conceptions of national identity moderate the impact of perceived indispensability on positive attitudes towards immigrants.

We will explore these assumptions by comparing the perceived indispensability of the three most represented immigrant groups in Portugal, some historically connected to the host society (i. e., Africans and Brazilians from former Portuguese colonies), and a third group with no such historical relations (Ukrainians). The first flow of Ukrainian immigrants started only in the late 1990s. Their average education level is high in comparison with the Portuguese natives and with other immigrants (Baganha, Marques, & Góis, 2004).

Research shows that Ukrainian immigrants in Portugal see themselves as highly qualified, good and hard workers, strong contributors to the social security system, and overall to be higher in status than other migrant groups (Mendes, 2011). Importantly, native Portuguese also perceive them as higher in competence, but lower in warmth, relative to African and Brazilian immigrants (Lages, Policarpo, Marques, Matos, & António, 2006).

Based on the reviewed literature we hypothesized that:

1. Given the historical relation between African and Brazilian minorities and the native Portuguese, as well as, the lack of perceived competence relative to other immigrant groups (Lages et al., 2006) we expect that perceptions of their identity indispensability should be the main factor associated with positive attitudes of native Portuguese toward these groups. That is, given the shared long colonial past and the fact that Portuguese is the official language in most of these immigrants countries' of origin (as recognized by the

existence of a Community of Portuguese Language Speaking Countries) we expect that native Portuguese will tend to perceive them as groups that are relevant and necessary for defining the Portuguese national identity.

2. Given the lack of historical relations and the content of the stereotype of Ukrainian immigrants as highly educated and skilled workers, we expect that perceptions of their functional indispensability should be the key factor associated with positive attitudes of Portuguese natives toward this group.

3. Overall, we expect that perceiving immigrants to be indispensable to the national identity or to the functioning of society will be associated with more inclusive group representations. However, because majority groups tend to prefer a one-group assimilationist model, whereas minorities tend to favor multiculturalism/integration (e.g. Dovidio, et al., 2001; Glasford & Dovidio, 2011; Verkuyten, 2006), we expect that one-group and not dual-identity representation will be the underlying mechanism that accounts for the positive effects of perceived identity and functional indispensability among native Portuguese. That is, we expect that high perceived indispensability of immigrants will trigger the representation that most effectively promotes the majority group's integration goals, that is, assimilationist model (Hehman et al., 2012). This more inclusive one-group representation will then relate to more positive attitudes.

4. Finally, because civic conceptions of national identity rely on valuing the active participation and contribution of groups to the society, and have been associated with more positive attitudes towards immigrants, we expect that civic conceptions will moderate the positive effect of both identity and functional indispensability on attitudes toward immigrants. Specifically, higher perceived indispensability of immigrants will be

associated with more positive attitudes towards them, via increased one-group representations, particularly among those native Portuguese who endorse a civic conception of the national identity. That is, we propose that a civic conception of the national identity facilitates the perception of immigrants as relevant contributors to the betterment of society and also to the definition of richer and diverse national identities, which then links to more positive attitudes towards them.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Participants were 118 native Portuguese college students<sup>1</sup> (31 male and 87 female), with age ranging from 18 to 36 years ( $M=21.39$ ,  $SD=2.94$ ).

### **Procedure**

Participants were recruited via email and completed a paper and pencil questionnaire with our measures of interest upon reporting to our laboratory. The questionnaire was administered to approximately 10 participants per session. The questions were ordered taking into account the proposed theoretical model, that is: demographics, conceptions of national identity, perceived outgroup indispensability (identity and functional items were randomized), followed by group representations and attitudes towards the outgroup<sup>2</sup>. The presentation of the questions that were specific for the three target groups were aggregated by group and the order of appearance was randomized. After completing the survey, participants were debriefed and received €10 voucher as a thank you for their participation.

### **Measures**

**Conceptions of national identity.** Participants indicated, on a 5-point scale (1=*Not*

*important at all to 5=Very important*), the importance of civic, ethnic and cultural aspects of citizenship for a person to be regarded as Portuguese (Reijerse et al., 2012). Civic items (5) referred to respect for rules, participation and political rights (e.g. ‘To what extent do you consider it important that someone who legally settles in Portugal and who follows all basic rules, must receive the same rights as a Portuguese citizen’). Ethnic items (3) focused on essentialist aspects of citizenship (e.g., ‘To what extent do you consider it important that a person has Portuguese ancestors’), and cultural items (6) referred to protecting and respecting the national culture (e.g., ‘To what extent do you consider it important that a person cherishes the traditional Portuguese lifestyle’). We conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to explore whether the three conceptualizations were empirically different. Ethnic, civic and cultural items loaded on three different factors explaining 53% of the variance, and were then aggregated into separate indexes ( $\alpha_{\text{civic}}=.68$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{ethnic}}=.67$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{cultural}}=.80$ )

**Perceived outgroup indispensability.** Participants rated to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each item on a 7-point scale (1=*Strongly Disagree* to 7=*Strongly Agree*) for the three targeted immigrant groups: Africans, Ukrainians and Brazilians. One of our major goals was to explore the effects of two types of indispensability, thus we developed and piloted<sup>3</sup> a set of items intended to measure identity indispensability (e.g. ‘The meaning of what it is to be a Portuguese would change if ‘*immigrant group target*’ was not part of Portugal’; ‘I would have a very different conception of Portugal if ‘*immigrant group target*’ was not part of Portugal’) and functional indispensability (‘*immigrant group target*’ contributes to the strength of the Portuguese economy’, ‘The economic future of Portugal depends on contributions of *immigrant group target*’, ‘). We conducted separate EFA on the items for each target group to explore whether they were empirically distinct (see online

supporting information for details). Identity and functional indispensability items loaded on two different factors and were then aggregated into separate indices (identity:  $\alpha_{\text{Ukrainian}}=.84$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{African}}=.87$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{Brazilian}}=.87$ ; functional:  $\alpha_{\text{Ukrainian}}=.85$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{African}}=.82$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{Brazilian}}=.86$ ).

**Group representations.** Using items from previous research (Gaertner, Mann, Murrell, & Dovidio, 1989), participants indicated on a 7-point scale (1=*Strongly Disagree* to 7=*Strongly Agree*) to what extent they felt like one-group ('In Portugal, when I think of "outgroup" and "my group" [the ethnic group chosen at the beginning of the survey, i.e. Portuguese of Portuguese origin]), I see them as one group of Portuguese'), two separate groups ('In Portugal, when I think of "outgroup" and native Portuguese, I see them as two separate groups'), and two subgroups of Portuguese ('In Portugal, when I think of "outgroup" and native Portuguese, I see them as two subgroups of Portuguese'). These representations were assessed with a single item each, and separately towards each of the three target immigrant groups.

**Outgroup attitudes.** Based on previous research that used social distance as a measure of attitudes with ethnic groups, we asked participants to rate, on a 5-point scale (1=*Not at all* to 5=*Very much*), the extent to which they were favorable to have each of the immigrant outgroups as classmates, teachers, neighbors, house guests, or in-laws (Binder et al., 2009; Hindriks, Verkuyten, & Coenders, 2014). We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to see whether participants empirically differentiated between the target groups (see online supporting information for details). The results suggest the three outgroups were empirically differentiated by the participants and therefore we created a social distance index for each outgroup ( $\alpha_{\text{Ukrainian}}=.87$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{African}}=.88$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{Brazilian}}=.87$ ). High scores mean less social distance towards the target groups.

## Results

The results are presented in two steps: descriptive findings analyzed using ANOVA and examination of the expected moderation-mediation model using the PROCESS bootstrapping macro (Hayes, 2013) for SPSS with 1,000 resamples and 95% bias-corrected standardized bootstrap CI. Identity and functional ingroup indispensability were the predictors, one-group and dual-identity representations were the mediators, social distance was the outcome, and civic national identity was the moderator. Predictors and moderator were mean centered.

The descriptive findings, means and zero order correlations, are shown in Table I<sup>4</sup>. We conducted a 2 indispensability type (functional, identity) X 3 target group (Ukrainians, Africans, Brazilians) within-factor repeated measures ANOVA to examine overall differences between the ratings of perceived types of indispensability among the three targeted immigrant groups. Results revealed a significant 2-way interaction between the target group and indispensability type  $F(1,117) = 4.91, p = .03, \eta_p^2 = .04$ . The African target group was rated higher in identity ( $M = 4.22$ ) relative to functional indispensability ( $M = 3.97$ ),  $t(117) = 2.03, p = .04, d = 2.08$ . The pattern for the Ukrainian target was reversed, that is, higher functional indispensability ( $M = 3.13$ ) relative to identity ( $M = 2.92$ ), but results were only marginally significant,  $t(117) = -1.56, p = .12, d = 1.82$ . For the Brazilian target, however, no differences were found between the two types of indispensability ( $M = 3.65; M = 3.78$ ). Importantly, additional cross-group comparisons revealed that African and Brazilian immigrants were rated higher in identity indispensability than Ukrainians ( $F(1,117) = 85.76, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .42; F(1,117) = 38.73, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .25$  ( $M_{\text{Africans}} = 4.22, M_{\text{Brazilians}} = 3.78, M_{\text{Ukrainians}} = 2.92$ ) but unexpectedly also

higher in functional indispensability relative to Ukrainian immigrants,  $F(1,117) = 49.8, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .30$ ;  $F(1,117) = 20.74, p < .001, \eta^2 = .15, M_{\text{Africans}} = 3.97, M_{\text{Brazilians}} = 3.65, M_{\text{Ukrainians}} = 3.13$ . Overall, these findings reveal that the participants made an empirical distinction between identity and functional indispensability across the different immigrant groups. That is, participants did not simply perceived immigrants as generally indispensable.

We ran three models using the PROCESS bootstrapping macro to test our moderated mediation model. The main results are presented in Table II. Overall, perceived indispensability of immigrants had a positive indirect effect on social distance. Furthermore, as predicted in hypotheses 1 and 2, different types of indispensability triggered this effect for the different immigrant groups and as predicted, this was moderated by the endorsement of civic national identity conceptions (hypothesis 4).

#### **African target**

For this model, functional indispensability was entered as a covariate<sup>5</sup> with, identity indispensability as the predictor, one-group and dual-identity representations as mediators, and social distance as the outcome. Evidence of the expected moderated mediation by civic national identity (H4) was found in the significant interaction between perceived identity indispensability and civic national identity on one-group representations,  $b = 0.36, p = .007$ , (see Figure 1). The more native Portuguese perceived African immigrants as indispensable to the Portuguese national identity, the more they felt like a one-group, but only when endorsing high levels of civic (+1SD) national identity, ( $t_{\text{high}}(114) = 2.45; p = .02; t_{\text{low}}(114) = 0.81; p = .42$ ). Additionally, identity indispensability was also positively associated with dual-identity,  $b = 0.23, p = .02$ , but this was not moderated by civic national identity, not



supporting the moderated mediation for dual-identity. Supportive of hypothesis 3, one-group representations were in turn positively related to reduced social distance, such that, the more native Portuguese felt as if they were one-group, the more favorable they were about having contact with the outgroup,  $b = 0.15, p = .04$ . Dual-identity, however, was negatively related to reduced social distance,  $b = -0.14, p = .04$ , that is, the greater the dual-identity, the less native Portuguese favored having contact with African immigrants.

Moderation of the indirect effect was probed by estimating the conditional indirect effect of identity indispensability on social distance through one-group representations at various values of civic national identity representations (one SD above and below the mean). The indirect effect of perceived identity indispensability on social distance towards African immigrants, through one-group representations, was positive only at higher levels of civic national identity endorsement (+1 SD),  $b = 0.05, 95\% \text{ CI } (0.01, 0.15)$ . Among those low in civic national identity (-1 SD), the indirect effect was negative but not significant,  $b = -0.02, 95\% \text{ CI } (-0.09, 0.02)$ . These results support both hypotheses 3 and 4, revealing that one-group representations mediated the positive effect of perceived identity indispensability of African immigrants to the national identity on reduced social distance, but only for those endorsing high civic conceptualization of the national identity. In sum, for native Portuguese endorsing high civic national identity, the more they perceived African immigrants as indispensable to define the Portuguese national identity, the more they felt like one-group, which then related to reduced social distance toward these immigrants.

### **Brazilian target**

For the Brazilian target, the interaction of civic national identity and each of the mediators (one-group and dual-identity) was not significant, thus not supporting the expected moderation (i.e., from each of the predictors to each of the mediators). We tested an alternative model that examined the moderation of civic national identity on the paths from each of the mediators to the outcome variable, since moderated mediation can occur from the predictors to the mediators or from the mediators to the outcome variable (Hayes, 2013). These moderated mediation models were not significant and thus unresponsive of moderated mediation for this immigrant group (H4). We explored an alternative multiple mediator model to examine the unconditional indirect effect of indispensability on reduced social distance, through one-group and dual identity representations. Contrary to what happened with the African and Ukrainian targets, the two types of indispensability were strongly correlated ( $r = .58$ ), suggesting that these are two highly overlapping predictors. If entered simultaneously in the model the predictors would cancel out each other's' effect, thus we included a single predictor at a time, estimating each predictor direct and indirect effects on the outcome variable separately (Hayes, 2013).

Results revealed that the more participants perceived Brazilian immigrants as indispensable for the Portuguese national identity, the higher the endorsement of both one-group,  $b = 0.25$ ,  $p = .002$ , and dual-identity,  $b = 0.16$ ,  $p = .09$ , representations, although marginally for the latter. However, only one-group and not dual-identity was then positively associated with reduced social distance,  $b = 0.22$ ,  $p = .001$ . As expected, the indirect effect of perceived identity indispensability of Brazilian immigrants on social distance through one-group representations was significant,  $b = 0.01$ , 95% CI (0.01, 0.13). The results for functional indispensability were very similar. Higher perceived functional

indispensability of Brazilian immigrants was associated with higher endorsement of both one-group group,  $b = 0.28$ ,  $p = .002$ , and dual-identity representations,  $b = 0.24$ ,  $p = .02$ , but only one-group representation was then positively associated with reduced social distance. Additionally, the indirect effect of functional indispensability on reduced social distance was significant, only through one-group representations,  $b = 0.07$ , 95% CI (0.03, 0.13).

In sum, the more native Portuguese perceived Brazilian immigrants as either indispensable to the national identity, or indispensable to the functioning of society, the less social distance they favored between themselves and those immigrants. Supportive of hypothesis 3, these positive effects were not due to increased representations of majority and immigrant groups as two groups on the same team (i.e. dual-identity), but instead as one-group of Portuguese.

### **Ukrainian target**

For this model, functional indispensability was entered as the predictor and identity indispensability as a covariate, one-group and dual-identity representations as mediators, and social distance as the outcome. However, the interaction of civic national identity and each of the mediators (one-group and dual-identity) was not significant, thus not supporting the expected moderation. We explored an alternative moderated mediation model, where moderation occurs in the paths from the mediators to the outcome variable. Interestingly, this model revealed a reliable moderated mediation, partially supporting hypothesis 4, that is, the positive indirect effect of perceived indispensability on social distance is limited to those who endorse higher levels of civic national identity.

As expected, functional indispensability was positively related to one-group,  $b = .18$ ,  $p = .03$ , but also to dual-identity,  $b = .30$ ,  $p = .002$ , representations. Supportive of hypothesis 2, the more native Portuguese perceived Ukrainian immigrants as functionally indispensable to the Portuguese society, the more they felt like one-group, and two groups on the same team. However, further supportive of hypothesis 3, only one-group, and not dual-identity, had a positive relation with reduced social distance,  $b = .26$ ,  $p = .003$ . Differently than for the African target, evidence of the conditional effect of civic representation was found in the significant interaction between one-group representation and civic national identity,  $b = .38$ ,  $p = .02$ . As illustrated in Figure 2, the more native Portuguese felt like one-group, the less social distance they felt towards Ukrainian immigrants, but only for those high in civic national identity,  $t_{\text{high}}(114) = 2.53$ ;  $p = .01$ ;  $t_{\text{low}}(114) = -0.99$ ;  $p = .32$ .

Moderation of the indirect effect was tested by estimating the conditional indirect effect of indispensability on social distance through one-group representations at various values of civic representations (one SD above and below the mean). Supporting hypothesis 4, the indirect effect of perceived functional indispensability on reduced social distance towards Ukrainian immigrants through one-group representations was positive, but only for those higher in civic national identity endorsement,  $b = .09$ , 95% CI (0.01, 0.20). Among those low in civic national identity, the indirect effect was still positive, but not significant,  $b = .005$ , 95% CI (-0.05, 0.06). Thus, perceiving Ukrainian immigrants as indispensable to the functioning of the Portuguese society increased the endorsement of one-group representations, which then related to reduced social distance toward these immigrants but only for those who endorse a civic conception of the national identity.

## Discussion

The current study examined a new perspective to understand host citizens' reactions to increasing development of more diverse immigrant communities. We proposed that host citizens' perceptions of immigrants' indispensability, both to the functioning of the host society and to the national identity are associated with positive towards them. Specifically, we investigated whether different forms of perceived indispensability of immigrants are associated with belonging to the same host country national group, which could reduce social distance, particularly when the common national identity is defined in a civic, more inclusive, way. There is very limited research on the conditions under which perceived indispensability improves intergroup outcomes, and on the mechanisms that underlie its positive effects on attitudes and behaviors towards immigrants. The current research extends previous work by addressing this important issue.

Indeed, the findings revealed that perceiving immigrants as indispensable for both the functioning of the host society and the definition of the national identity related to increased one-group representations, thereby reducing acceptable social distance towards immigrants. As expected, however, this effect was stronger for those who conceive the national identity in a civic, inclusive, way. Importantly, we illustrated for the first time that different immigrant groups are perceived as being indispensable in different domains, depending on their historical relations with the host society.

### ***We need Them, but for different reasons: identity and functional indispensability***

One of the major contributions of this study illustrates the unique effects of two types of indispensability on intergroup outcomes. As predicted, our results revealed that

immigrants can be regarded as indispensable in different domains. Native Portuguese differentiated between different immigrant groups in evaluating their indispensability to both the national identity and their contribution for society. Overall and supporting the importance of the common colonial past and the long historical relations between the groups, African and Brazilian immigrants, relative to Ukrainians, were regarded as more indispensable to define the national identity. Specifically, as expected, for African immigrants, identity, but not functional indispensability related to reduced social distance, via increased one-group representations. That is, native Portuguese, perceived African immigrants as indispensable to define the national identity, which related to increased one-group representations, which was associated with reduced social distance. Importantly, and supportive of our hypotheses, this positive effect was stronger for those host citizens who endorsed a civic, more inclusive, conception of national identity.

These results conceptually support previous findings that regarding immigrants as indispensable for the national category relates to higher acceptance of immigrants' cultural rights (Verkuyten et al., 2014). Extending previous work, the current research allowed for a direct and simultaneous comparison between the distinct mediating roles of one-group and dual-identity representations. However, contrary to the results of Verkuyten et al. (2014), our results revealed that one-group and not dual-identity is one of the underlying mechanisms that accounts for the positive effects of indispensability. This is consistent with previous research showing that majority groups tend to prefer a one-group assimilationist model, whereas minorities tend to favor multiculturalism/integration (e.g. Dovidio et al., 2001; Glasford & Dovidio, 2011; Verkuyten, 2006).

Unexpectedly given their reputation for being competent and hardworking (Lages et al., 2006), Ukrainian immigrants were not rated as the most functionally indispensable group relative to Africans and Brazilians. However, as hypothesized (H3), functional, and not identity indispensability for Ukrainians, related to reduced social distance. That is, the more the native majority perceived Ukrainian immigrants as contributing to the economic and social development of the host society, the more they endorsed one-group representations, thereby reducing social distance towards them. Again, it was the assimilation representation that mediated the impact of indispensability on reduced social distance. As for the African target, indispensability was positively related to dual-identity as well, however, dual-identity was then negatively associated with reduced social distance. The more native Portuguese endorsed a dual-identity, the less they wanted to have contact with immigrants. Importantly, this finding was replicated for all three immigrant groups regardless of the type of indispensability (i.e., both for functional and identity forms of indispensability). Nevertheless, this result should be interpreted with caution given the correlational nature of our study and the complexity of previous findings regarding majority and minority integration preferences (Hehman et al., 2012). The interplay between ethnic and national identities, that is, subgroup and common identities is complex and largely dependent on the local social context. Research shows that the integration preferences of majority and minorities are functional and vary depending on group-based needs in a given context (Hehman et al., 2012). Future research could explore this finding in other social contexts, as well as experimentally, while testing several concurrent potential mediators.

In addition, similar to the findings for African immigrants, the effect of indispensability on reduced social distance was moderated by civic conceptualizations of

national identity. Perceived functional indispensability was associated with higher one-group representations, but these only related to reduced social distance for those endorsing a more civic definition of the national identity. It should be noted, however, that civic national identity moderated the relations between one-group perceptions and reduced social distance, but not the relation between indispensability and one-group perceptions, as was the case for African immigrants. Though not hypothesized, this finding suggests interesting extensions of the present study. For example, exploring if this effect is related to the specific immigrant groups used in this study and their relations with the host society, or if it involves further differences between the effects of different types of indispensability *per se*.

Finally, results for the Brazilian target only partially supported our hypotheses. On the one hand, functional and identity indispensability were both related to reduced social distance and not mainly to identity indispensability, as we expected. Consistent with this finding, native Portuguese did not evaluate Brazilian immigrants differently regarding the two types of indispensability, i.e. both were rated equally high. Though not hypothesized, this finding seems consistent with the specifics of the Brazilian migration flows to Portugal.

The first wave of Brazilian immigrants to Portugal was mainly characterized by high-status, high-qualified immigrants (Góis, Marques, Padilla, & Peixoto, 2009). After 1990, however, the migration flows increased and changed significantly, with the vast majority of immigrants having less privileged backgrounds. So, until the 1990s Brazilians could be considered as highly indispensable for the functioning of the host society, as they hold specific high qualified jobs (e.g., experts in advertisement) (Padilla, 2005). Thus, Brazilian immigrants can be perceived by the native majority as equally indispensable for



both the definition of the national identity and the functioning of the society. We believe the specifics of the Brazilian migration flows may account for our findings.

Importantly, the positive effects of both types of indispensability were again mediated by the endorsement of one-group, and not dual-identity representations, but did not differ depending of the conceptualization of the national identity. That is, regardless of defining the national identity in a civic way, the more native Portuguese perceived Brazilian immigrants as indispensable to the national identity or to the functioning of the host society, the less social distance they prefer with regard to them.

Overall, our results are supportive of previous research showing the positive effects of category indispensability on support for immigrants' cultural rights (Verkuyten et al., 2014). Host country citizens' perceptions of immigrants indispensability was related to reduced social distance. Extending the scope of research on common identity and indispensability, this research revealed the unique effects of increased one-group vs dual-identity representations, and illustrated that these effects are limited to those endorsing a civic representation of national identity. Finally, this study empirically reveals the unique effects of different types of indispensability. As predicted, groups are not equally indispensable on the same dimensions but also that the different types of indispensability are associated with the positive effects for each of the three immigrant groups.

### **Limitations and future research**

We acknowledge the limitations imposed by the correlational nature of our data, but overall the findings are consistent with previous empirical work and provide important and novel theoretical insights. The college student convenience sample is also very specific and potentially limits the generalizability of our findings. Future research could attempt to test

these hypotheses using experimental procedures to further examine the hypothesized model, as well as include a more diverse sample particularly with regard to age and education level to increase the generalizability of the results. For example, in the future, we could manipulate the two types of indispensability (simultaneously or independently) to test their impact on different group representations, attitudes and behaviors. Future research could also address additional mediators that conceptually could explain the effects of indispensability on intergroup attitudes and more importantly, if there are different underlying processes that account for the effects of the two forms of indispensability.

Our results revealed that the positive effects of perceived indispensability are more pronounced when host country citizens endorse more inclusive conceptions of national identity. One further question though, is whether group indispensability is also relevant for the development of more global, cosmopolitan identities that are superordinate to national identities. Recent research showed that a global identity (i.e., with the world population) is associated with positive outcomes, such as greater intentions to act against inequalities (Reese, Proch, & Cohrs, 2014). One other important question for future research is whether the perceived indispensability of different cultural groups in globalized societies might lead to the development of more global identities that crosscut national and cultural borders, toward what some authors refer to as “global citizenship”(Sindic, 2011).

Finally, future research could also explore the factors that trigger perceived indispensability. Knowing the variety of dimensions of indispensability could be extremely relevant for developing strategies to enhance perceptions of indispensability. Exploring other domains where groups can claim indispensability, for example, culturally or

athletically in a given society could also extend the scope of the current indispensability approach.

Despite the limitations, this research theoretically extends the scope of the novel approach of indispensability of groups in several ways indicating that different immigrant groups are perceived as being indispensable on different dimensions involving the functioning of the host society and the national identity. The findings also reveal the unique underlying role of more inclusive, one-group representations and how contextual factors, such as a civic national identity moderate the impact of perceived indispensability on intergroup attitudes. Finally, this research also provides insights with practical implications regarding the intergroup attitudes of natives in host societies and immigrant communities. Indispensability of immigrants can be used as a strategic tool to promote their acceptance, for example in campaigns and policies to reduce common stereotypes of immigrants as a drain or a threat to the society. Finally, the current work reveals that the wave of globalization can change the view that immigrant communities are not something that simply happens to host nations, but rather are opportunities to be sought after, encouraged and rewarded with host country citizens' respect and inclusion.

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## Footnotes

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<sup>1</sup> The participants' level of education was not significantly related to any variable and thus was not controlled for in any of the tested models.

<sup>2</sup>As part of a broader research project the questionnaire also included items to assess acculturation attitudes, intergroup emotions, ingroup projection and traits.

<sup>3</sup> A separate pilot study tested 33 items to measure both types of indispensability. Negative items were excluded due to low loadings and the final measure included 23 items.

<sup>4</sup> Cultural national identity ratings were not significantly associated with most of the variables of interest, and were excluded from the analyses. We explored if ethnic conceptions also moderated our results, but none of the conditional effects were reliable. Hence all the subsequent analyses were conducted with civic conception of national identity as the single moderator variable in our models.

<sup>5</sup> PROCESS estimates models with multiple predictors by entering the additional predictors as covariates. In order to estimate the direct and indirect effects of all  $k$   $X$  variables PROCESS runs  $k$  times, each time putting one  $X_i$  in the model and the remaining  $X$  variables as covariates. Mathematically, all resulting paths, direct and indirect effect are the same as if they were estimated simultaneously (Hayes, 2013). We estimated all alternative models for the African target (i. e., using functional indispensability as the main predictor and identity as the covariate) and the Ukrainian target (i.e., using identity indispensability as the main predictor and functional as the covariate) and there were no reliable indirect or conditional effects of indispensability on attitudes.

Table I: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between the Variables

Africans	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Ethnic national identity	3.56	.08	-						
2. Cultural national identity	3.32	.07	.20*	-					
3. Civic national identity	3.84	.05	-.25**	-.05	-				
4. Functional indispensability Africans	3.97 <sup>a</sup>	.12	-.09	.26**	.17	-			
5. Identity indispensability Africans	4.22 <sup>b</sup>	.12	-.03	.09	.16	.39**	-		
6. One-group Africans	2.94	1.22	-.24**	.12	.31**	.23*	.18*	-	
7. Dual-identity Africans	3.17	1.32	.01	.08	.06	.10	.22*	.24*	-
8. Social distance Africans	3.51	.95	-.21*	-.09	.26**	.11	.08	.26**	-.11
Ukrainians	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Ethnic national identity	3.56	.08	-						
2. Cultural national identity	3.32	.07	.20*	-					
3. Civic national identity	3.84	.05	-.25**	-.05	-				
4. Functional indispensability Ukrainians	3.13 <sup>a</sup>	.11	-.12	.17	.21*	-			
5. Identity indispensability Ukrainians	2.92 <sup>b†</sup>	.12	.03	.08	-.06	.36**	-		
6. One-group Ukrainians	2.19	1.11	-.38**	-.06	.12	.22*	.10	-	
7. Dual-identity Ukrainians	2.58	1.3	-.20*	.01	.12	.34**	.22*	.55**	-
8. Social distance Ukrainians	3.36	.93	-.31**	-.07	.27**	.21*	.10	.36**	.20*
Brazilians	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Ethnic national identity	3.56	.08	-						
2. Cultural national identity	3.32	.07	.20*	-					
3. Civic national identity	3.84	.05	-.25**	-.05	-				
4. Functional indispensability Brazilians	3.65 <sup>a</sup>	.11	-.06	.26**	.23*	-			
5. Identity indispensability Brazilians	3.78 <sup>a</sup>	.13	-.00	.06	.20*	.58**	-		
6. One-group Brazilians	2.96	1.22	-.17	.11	.09	.28**	.28**	-	
7. Dual-identity Brazilians	3.21	1.35	.09	.07	-.10	.22*	.16	.30**	-
8. Social distance Brazilians	3.65	.87	-.21*	-.06	.20*	.03	.17	.30**	-.03

Note: \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$

Means with different superscripts in each line are significantly different from each other at  $p < .05$ .

Table II: Conditional indirect effects for all target groups

African target									
Predictors	M (One-group)			M (Dual-identity)			Y (Social distance)		
	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p
(W) Civic national identity	.51**	.17	.00	.04	.20	.84	.29*	.15	.05
(Cov) Functional indispensability	.16	.09	.09	.02	.11	.82	.03	.08	.69
(X) Identity indispensability	.10	.08	.25	.23**	.10	.02	.04	.07	.53
X x W	.36**	.13	.00	.18	.15	.22	.15	.11	.16
Constant	2.26**	.39	.00	3.07**	.45	.00	3.37**	.40	.00
M (One-group)	-	-	-	-	-	-	.15*	.08	.04
M (Dual-identity)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.14*	.07	.04
Ukrainian target									
Predictors	M (One-group)			M (Dual-identity)			Y (Social distance)		
	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p
(X) Functional indispensability	.18*	.08	.03	.30**	.09	.00	.10	.07	.12
(Cov) Identity indispensability	.02	.08	.82	.12	.09	.21	.04	.07	.53
Constant	-.05	.25	.83	-.34	.29	.24	3.36**	.08	.00
(W) Civic national identity	-	-	-	-	-	-	.33**	.13	.01
M (One-group)	-	-	-	-	-	-	.26**	.08	.00
M (Dual-identity)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.03	.07	.65
M (One-group) x W	-	-	-	-	-	-	.38*	.16	.02
M (Dual-identity) x W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.08	.12	.51
X x W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.14	.12	.23
Brazilian target									
Predictors	M (One-group)			M (Dual-identity)			Y (Social distance)		
	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p
(X) Functional indispensability	.27**	.09	.00	.24*	.10	.02	-.03	.07	.66
Constant	1.96**	.34	.00	2.33**	.38	.00	3.28**	.29	.00
M (One-group)	-	-	-	-	-	-	.25**	.07	.00
M (Dual-identity)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.08	.06	.20
Predictors	M (One-group)			M (Dual-identity)			Y (Social distance)		
	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p
(X) Identity indispensability	.25**	.08	.00	.16	.09	.09	.06	.06	.28
Constant	2.01**	.32	.00	2.62**	.36	.00	3.03**	.29	.00
M (One-group)	-	-	-	-	-	-	.22**	.07	.00
M (Dual-identity)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.09	.06	.14

Note: \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$

Tabled values are unstandardized regression coefficient

Figures Captions

*Figure 1* African immigrants: interaction of identity indispensability and civic national identity

*Figure 2* Ukrainian immigrants: interaction of one-group representations and civic national identity



