MICRI:
Measuring
immigration related
conflict
risk
index

A novel composite indicator for measuring
conflict risk at sub-regional level

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Conference „Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe"

Rising Conflicts and Polarisation in European Societies?

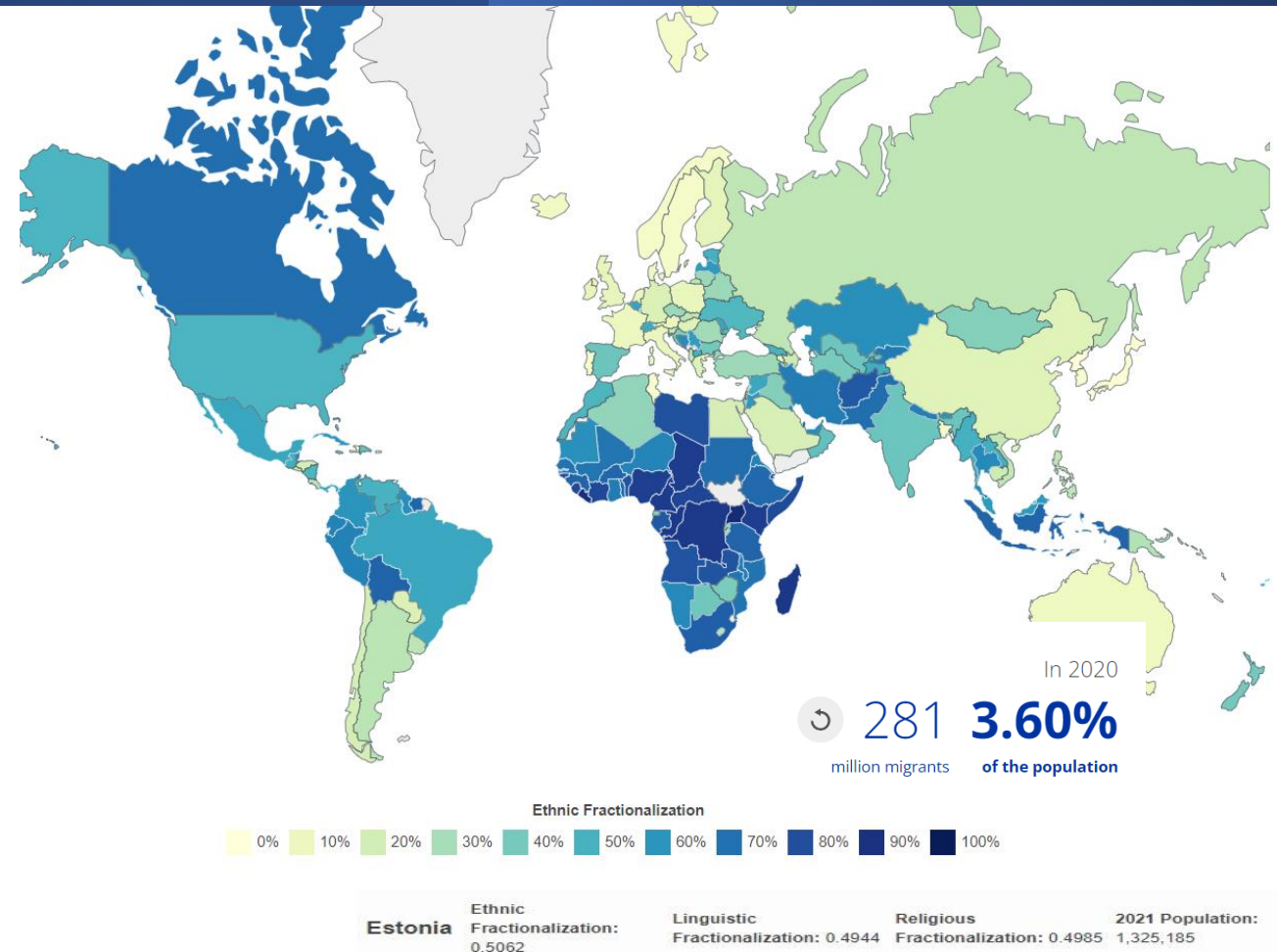Indicators, Empirical Evidence and Future Prospects

Villa Vigoni 9-11/2023

Frame of the presentation

1. Why? What is the importance of monitoring and measuring potential immigration related conflict risk in the society.

2. How? We propose MICRI index as a tool to measure the risk of immigration related conflicts.

3. What´s the methodology behind this Index?

4. Does it work and what it tells about Estonia?

5. Some additional steps done

6. What´s next?

Why Measure the Potential for Immigration-Related Conflicts?

- Diversity is growing in many nations, often as a result of increased immigration.

- Sudden influx of immigrants has been linked to negative attitudes and intergroup conflict (Halevy & Cohen, 2019; Marozzi, 2016; Barbulescue & Beaudonnet, 2014; Dancygier, 2010)

- In order to prevent intergroup frictions in the society, policy makers and security analysts should systematically monitor the potential risk in the society.

In 2020

↺ 281 **3.60%**

million migrants **of the population**

Ethnic Fractionalization

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

| Estonia | Ethnic Fractionalization: 0.5062 | Linguistic Fractionalization: 0.4944 | Religious Fractionalization: 0.4985 | 2021 Population: 1,325,185 |

Source: worldpopulationreview.com

Theory: risk for conflict is increasing if ...

1. Groups have strong group identity (ethnic, religious etc.)
2. Low general trust between the members of community as well as trust in institutions.
3. Difference in belief systems.
4. Negative attitudes and stereotypes towards immigration.
5. Threat perception, including to its own group.
6. Dissatisfaction, perceived inequality and feelings of exclusion.
7. Competition for resources.
8. Intensive immigration to a region.

+ mobilization of different groups often arise as deliberate political strategies employed by leaders and groups.

How MICRI can help to measure and monitor potential conflict risk?

Our research team has constructed a composite index – MICRI.

Advantages of MICRI:

- It allows to measure risk at sub-national level, allowing to capture regional differences.
- It includes subjective indicators (13 out of 17 indicators), which characterize groups' grievances.

Many scholars have indicated the importance of the local dimension and the need to use regionally disaggregated data in the conflict studies (Cederman & Girardin, 2007; Cederman et al., 2009; Ward et al., 2010; Costalli & Moro, 2011; Stroschein, 2017), which might generate a better out-come in predictions.

Methodology: steps for constructing MICRI

1. Theoretical framework
- What can elevate conflict risk

2. Indicator/variable selection

3. Multivariate analysis
- Relationships between indicators

3. Normalization of indicators

4. Weighting and aggregating

5. Validity analysis

Constructing an Index to measure immigration related conflict risk at subnational level

41 risk indicators identified based on literature and theories

17 risk indicators met the requirement for the index

13 subjective
4 objective

10 dimensions from the indicators

Requirements for the indicators:
- ➤ *the data should be regularly updated;*
- ➤ *the data must be reliable;*
- ➤ *relevant;*
- ➤ *accessible for international use;*
- ➤ *and can be measured on regional level.*

sources →

European Social Survey

STATISTICS ESTONIA 100

data of 75 out of 79 Estonian municipalities
- three ESS waves (2014 – 2018) merged

Dimensions and indicators:

all indicators were transformed to a scale of 0 to 1

1. Identity/sense of beloning

ID1= Ethnic groups
ID2= Religious groups

2. Distrust

DT1=generalised trust to other people
DT2=institutional trust

3. Conflicting values

V1= negative immigration attitude
V2= negative stereotypes
V3= value gap

4. Feelings of threat

TH1= cultural threat
TH2= economic threat
TH3= physical threat

5. Inequality

IN = discrimination perception

6. Dissatisfaction

D= feelings of dissatisfation

7. Poor communication

PC = understanding different people, incl contacts

8. Low norm obedience

LNO = people who say it is not important to follow rules

9. Lack of economic resources

LER1 = feelings of poverty
LER2= registered unemployment

10. Immigration

IM = average immigration rate to region

MICRI=

ID1 + ID2 + DT1 + DT2 + V1 + V2 + V3 + TH1 + TH2 + TH3 + IN*10 + D*5 + PC + LNO + LER1 + LER2*10 + IM

	The most risk-prone	Average	The least risk-prone
Identity	2.0	0.7	0.0
Distrust	1.0	0.7	0.5
Values	1.7	1.2	0.7
Feelings of threat	1.4	0.9	0.5
Inequality	1.4	0.5	0.0
Dissatisfaction	1.7	0.6	0.4
Poor communication	0.1	0.1	0.1
Norm obedience	0.3	0.3	0.3
Lack of resources	0.8	0.6	0.5
Immigration	2.4	0.9	0.6
Total risk score	12.84	6.8	3.6

Internal validity
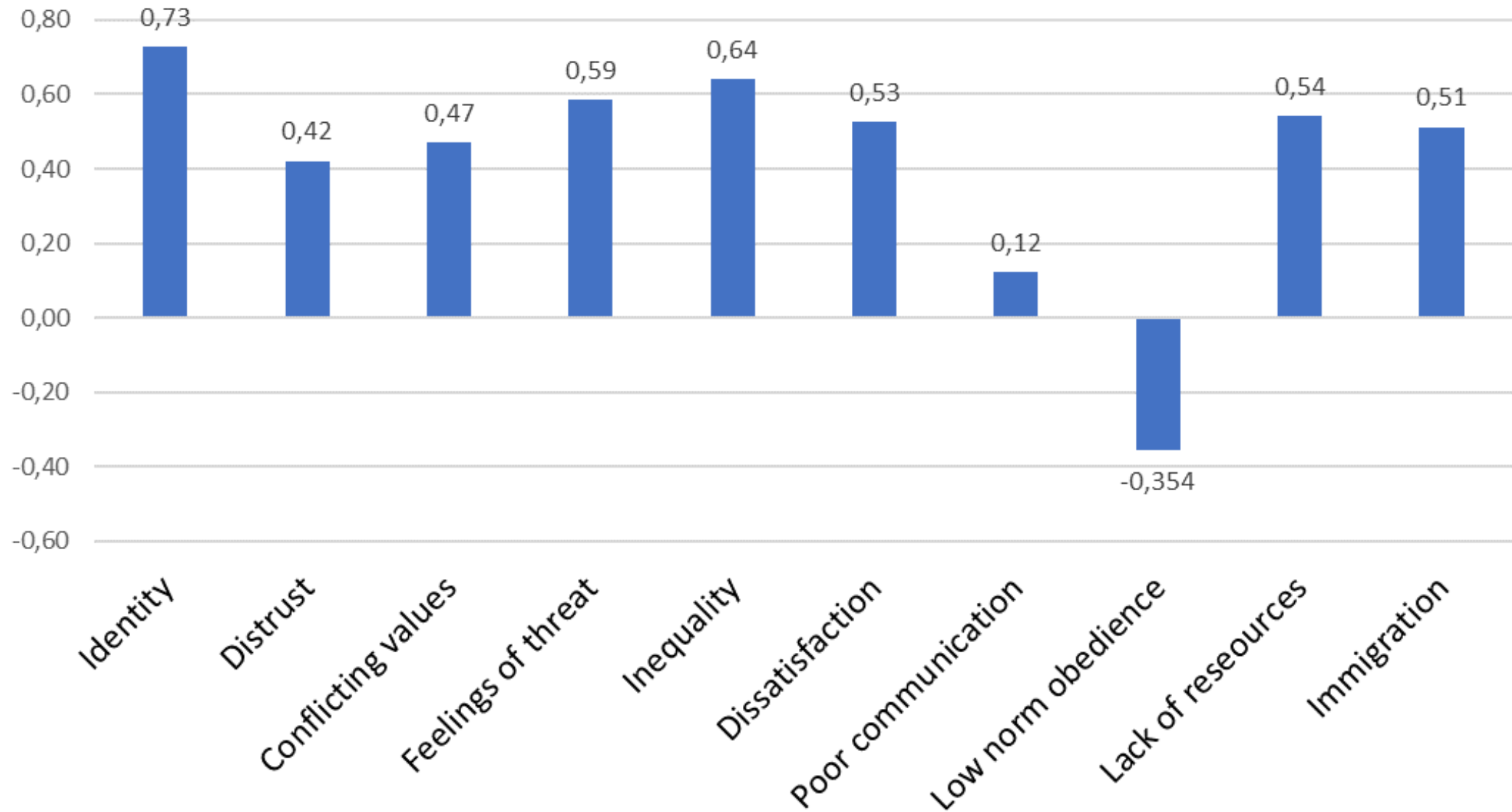
MICRI's c-alpha 0.698

Indicators European Social Survey + statistics	Average	G 1	G 2	G 3	G 4
1. Distribution of minority groups	0.31	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.60
2. Different religious groups	0.37	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00
3. Generalised distrust	0.23	0.23	0.18	0.24	0.30
4. Distrust of state institutions	0.49	0.49	0.44	0.50	0.57
5. Negative immigration attitudes	0.52	0.49	0.58	0.53	0.63
6. Negative stereotypes about immigrants	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.47	0.40
7. Values conflict	0.23				0.19
8. Immigration as fret for culture	0.35	0.34	0.30	0.39	0.35
9. Immigration as fret for economy	0.43				0.46
10. Lack of physical security	0.15	0.10	0.14	0.18	0.38
11. Feeling of injustice	0.48	0.26	0.19	0.56	2.43
12. Dissatisfaction	0.59	0.49	0.55	0.70	1.01
13. Communication wish (skills)	0.15	0.14	0.26	0.11	0.12
14. Low norm obedience	0.34	0.35	0.41	0.30	0.28
15. Poverty level	0.27	0.24	0.29	0.25	0.50
16. Unemployment %	0.31	0.28	0.31	0.31	0.54
17. Immigration rate	0.87	0.74	0.93	1.06	1.02

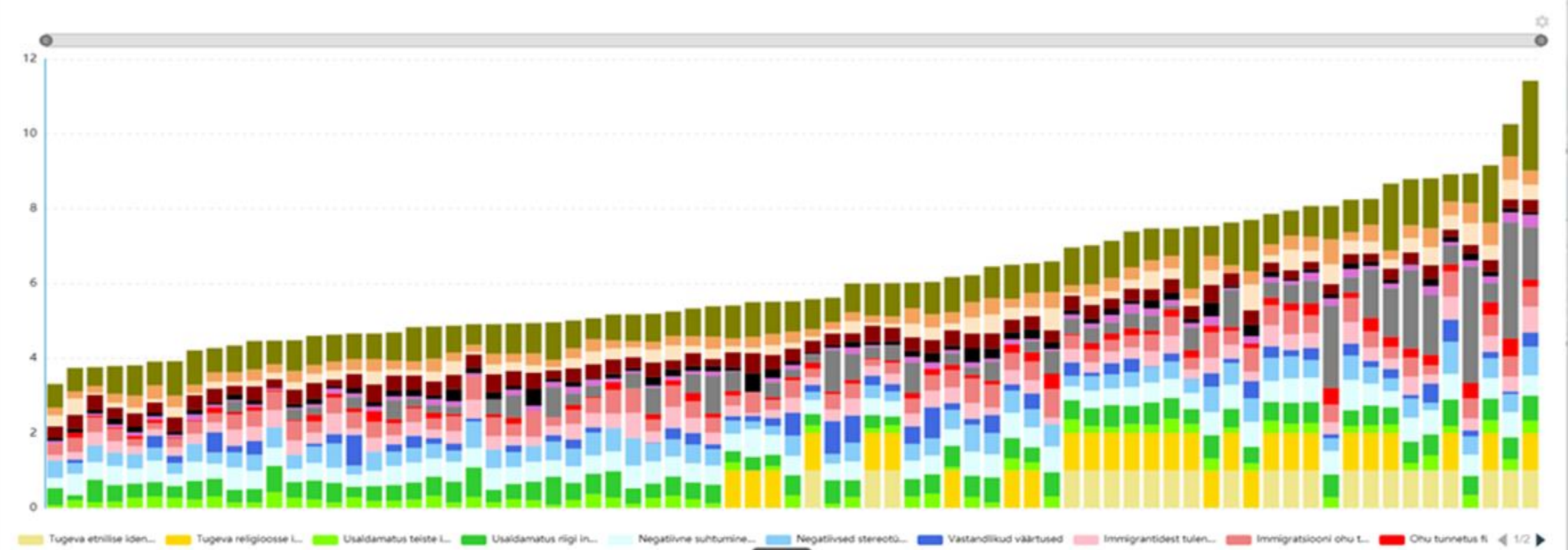Risk level is not high in Estonia
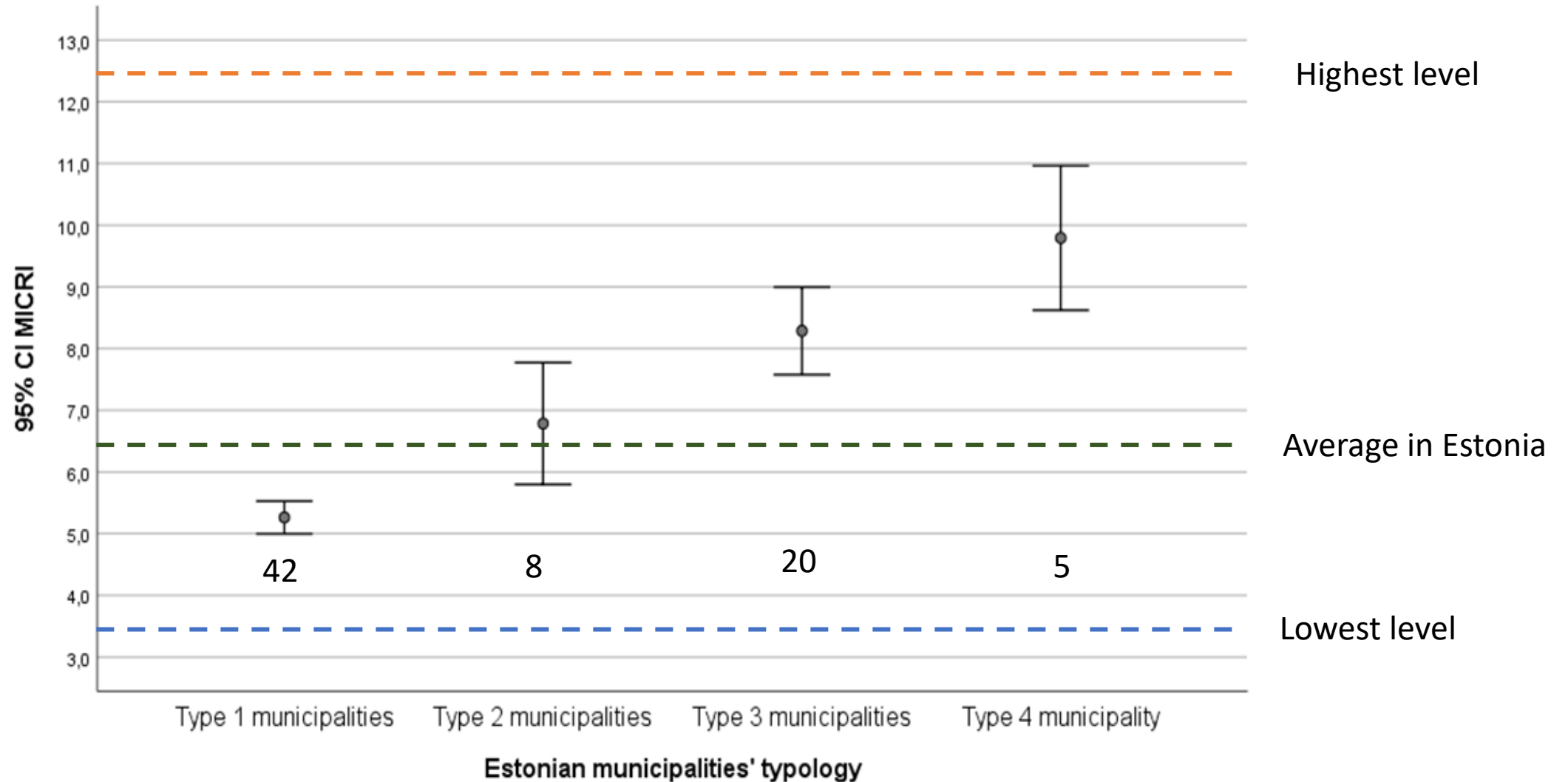
Regionally unequally distributed



Etnilise konflikti riski indeks

Indikaatorite jaotus KOV

Tugeva etnilise iden... | Tugeva religioosse i... | Usaldamatus teiste i... | Usaldamatus riigi in... | Negatiivne suhtumine... | Negatiivsed stereotü... | Vastandlikud väärtused | Immigrantidest tulen... | Immigratsiooni ohu t... | Ohu tunnetus fi 1/2

4 types of municipalities in Estonia

	Average	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
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Interactive Web tool, 17 indicators
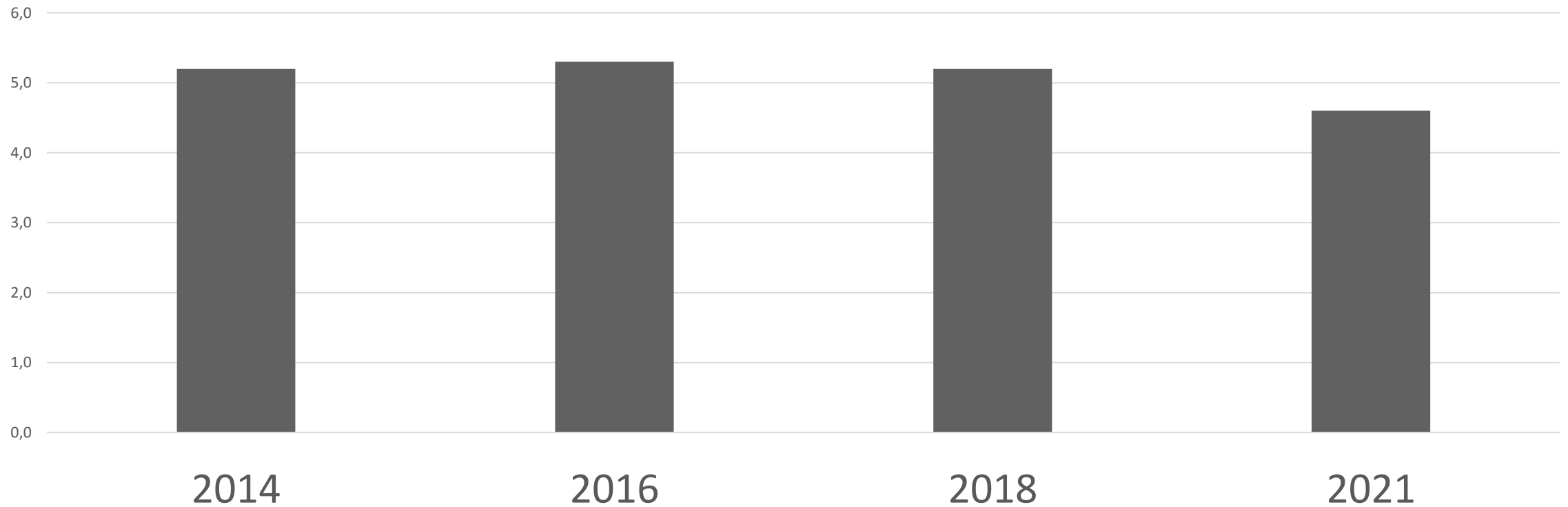
What's next?

- External validation of the index
  - We have found some evidence that inhabitants of Estonian cities with higher immigration related conflict risk were less supporting welcoming Ukrainian refugees to Estonia

- Expand it to other countries
  - Countries where European Social Survey have been run?
    - Including Sweden

Cooperation needed! If interested, please contact us

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Q&A

Thank you!

MEASURING THE RISK OF IMMIGRATION RELATED CONFLICTS

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