

## The Limited Role of Context in the Globalization Backlash

A wealth of research over the last decade has documented the causes and consequences of what it has termed a "globalization backlash." A recurring claim in this literature is that local exposure to globalization, as measured for instance with import penetration and foreigner influxes, has led to rising nationalism, populism, isolationism, protectionism, and xenophobia among the mass public. This paper synthesizes and re-evaluates the empirical implications of these findings. Leveraging 17 years of national surveys covering 600,000 unique respondents and 300 policy items, we estimate associations between a range of contextual indicators of globalization exposure and individual preferences over trade, immigration, international cooperation, and the military. Contrary to prevailing expectations, we observe minimal effects of contextual variables on public mood on globalization. This challenges a popular narrative and provides support for the argument that the backlash is due to issue polarization rather than public opinion swings against globalization."