

# **The Attitudes Toward Asylum Policies (ATAP) Scale: Development and Validation**

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## **Abstract**

**Objective:** In this study, we aim at building a new scale for policy attitudes toward asylum seekers, within a framework of unrest environment. Attitudes toward migration and migrants are intensively discussed in the literature. However, analyses of citizens' attitudes toward reactive public policies towards immigrants, and more specifically, asylum seekers, are rare. In this study, we face these attitudes with varying levels of external threats and test whether violence affects demand for more exclusionary asylum policies.

**Method:** we use two following surveys, in which we test a new set of relevant questions. These questions were earlier phrased and reshaped by small panels of experts and line citizens. A mixed of exploratory and confirmatory factoring technique is used to establish the dimensionality of this scale. Moreover, we use a multiple-group (highly exposed versus low exposed to terror attacks) analysis to determine the common factor structures across exposure levels.

**Results:** we found no difference in the structure of attitudes toward public policies to control streams of asylum seekers.

**Discussion:** attitudes toward asylum seekers are independent of actual threat but represent a consistent public opinion that varies across inclusive versus exclusive attitudes.

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## Introduction

In recent years, we are witnessing a radical shift in public perception and political reaction to asylum seekers and refugees, as part of a larger backlash against immigrants and immigration in general, especially following terror attacks and other forms of political violence. This phenomenon raises some interesting questions. Do members of host countries react negatively to refugees and asylum seekers' issues due to their exposure to violent events? Do acts of terrorism and war affect the public's support for exclusionary asylum policies? Does this support translate to a harsher policy? We see great importance in the relationship between policy makers and the public and are interested in policy attitudes of members of a host county toward asylum policy. By dividing the Israeli asylum policy into separate questions, we aim to evaluate its citizens' asylum attitudes and provide a set of questions to measure these attitudes amid violent events.

The migration phenomenon includes many subgroups, such as immigrants, illegal and undocumented immigrants, economic immigrants, displaced persons, refugees and asylum seekers. We chose to study attitudes toward asylum seekers (ATAS) due to their unique characteristics and differences from other migrants. On the one hand, one might expect a more welcoming approach toward them, or less demand for harsh asylum policies, since asylum seekers are fleeing significant hardship in their countries of origin. Unlike the various situations of immigrants, work migrants and illegal immigrants, who can choose to immigrate to another country, this right is not granted to refugees and asylum seekers. Asylum seekers are forced to flee their homelands due to their political allegiances or threats of persecution on different grounds, such as religion or sexual orientation. In addition, refugees and asylum seekers lose the protection of their own government since threats of persecution in their country are the reason for their escape (Schuster, 2003).

On the other hand, the growing numbers of asylum seekers who are visibly different from native-born citizens (i.e., in appearance, dress, and customs) might be threatening in the eyes of members of host countries. More so, their status as a refugee may be seen as indefinite, and specifically due to their need of help and shelter from other countries, they are perceived as burden on the host country's resources and therefore seen as more a hassle than a positive workforce, as other migrants might be. This complexity bears the question, how would they be treated in host countries?

We find answers to this question in public opinion polls, policymakers' statements and recent studies that indicate that members of host countries hold negative attitudes toward asylum seekers and call for harsh asylum policies (Markus, 2010; McKay, Thomas, & Kneebone, 2012; Hatton, 2015; Nickerson & Louis, 2008).

Although, the scale and scope of the asylum phenomenon changed dramatically during the twentieth century, the seeking of asylum is not a new phenomenon. Countries have been facing the challenging tasks of controlling their borders for many decades, as borders of any given society defines who belongs to the collective and who does not. In general, borders have become much more complex, in terms of both geographic and non-geographic issues, as well as social, political and economic dynamics. The state establishes a frontier regime that is defined by the distinction between inside and outside, state and non-state, and establishes structural differences between private and public, residents and foreigners (Mitchell, 1991). Immigration and emigration also have serious implications for the state's conception of sovereignty (Shakes 2001). As immigration control is one of the defining features of the modern sovereign state and, as such, serves as an important means by which a territorial order is constituted in terms of state governance belonging (Bartleson, 1995).

One way to gauge a country's asylum policy is on a scale between tolerant and exclusionary. A more tolerant policy consists of a broad definition of the term refugee and more flexible immigration laws that enable the country to provide work permits and other services such as education, health, and welfare. An exclusionary asylum policy, in this context, contains a very restrictive criterion for refugee status and grants a temporary visa for a minimal number of years. Detention is a given sanction to those entering the country without proper process and, in some cases, this policy also includes shortening the period of humanitarian protection granted by the country (Pederson, Atterll & Heveli 2005; Klocker, 2004; UNHCR 2005; Haddad 2008).

In the Twentieth Century attention began to focus on asylum seekers as a 'problem' for European states, as the number of asylum seekers rose, at times dramatically, and asylum seekers became more visible. Over the years, a radical shift occurred in public perception and political reaction to asylum seekers, as part of a larger backlash against immigrants and immigration in general. These changing migration patterns, the increase in numbers and visibility of asylum seekers, were reflected in public opinion polls, anti-immigration initiatives and a gradual increase in the popularity of right-wing parties – especially in Europe, as the flow and increased volume of

migrants appeared to be a threatening combination of ethno-culture characteristics on the indigenous population.

Considering these developments along with the link between the government and the public that in some cases enables public-driven changes in policy, we seek to understand what makes members formulate negative attitudes toward asylum seekers that translate into support for harsh asylum policies. In the search for a validated tool to measure such attitudes, we turned to the immigration literature and realized that most of the empirical studies focused on public views toward immigrants and asylum seekers, and that there is much less focus on reactions to issues of immigration and asylum policies. Furthermore, the questions used to measure attitudes toward immigration and asylum policies were vague and inclusive in some cases and measuring other aspects of the phenomenon in other. In a review of studies that examine attitudes in relation to immigration, Ceobanu and Escandell (2010) point to a common tendency to refer to attitudes toward immigrants (ATI) and toward immigration policy together, rather than as two distinct domains. An attitude toward immigrants refers to the attitudes of members of host countries toward the immigrants as a social group and as individual people. On the other hand, attitudes toward immigration policies (ATIP) refer to their attitudes toward the phenomenon and how the country should deal with it (Ceobanu & Escandell, 2010, also see Meuleman et al. (2009).

In light of such confusion and a lack of clarity, this study aims to fill an empirical gap in the literature regarding attitudes toward asylum policies per se, amid exposure to political violent acts such as terrorism attacks and wars. We chose Israel as our case study since Israel has only recently begun to be a host country for asylum seekers. It is dealing with the asylum phenomena and formulating asylum policies, while prosecuting the ongoing Israeli – Palestinian conflict. Under the influence of an ongoing violent conflict, we expect respondents to be more involved in policy beyond their personal opinions on the asylum seekers themselves since policies and restrictions are of high importance at times of violence.

This article revisits two studies to validate the suggested scale: Study 1 was conducted immediately following the 2014 Israel-Gaza war and examined the potential role of exposure to political violence on attitudes toward asylum policies (ATAP). This was conducted in and by a unique empirical model that contemplates the effects of wartime both in a geographical variation and a self-reported one. The geographic variation of exposure consists of two levels – hot and cold regarding the Israeli – Palestinian conflict.

Study 2 was conducted two years after the Israel-Gaza war and aimed to replicate Study 1 theoretically and empirically by using a more rigorous study design. Prior to these studies, we developed the set of questions in a sequence of pilots that ensured the quality and the clarity of the instrument. Our calibration of this tool included approaching a variety of groups in Israeli society, different in their interaction with asylum seekers and levels exposure to political violence (i.e. - random terrorist attacks, proximity to the rocket range of Gaza). We also learned about the common terms used among Israelis to describe asylum seekers, and the public's knowledge regarding different aspects of the asylum policy.

### **Attitudes toward immigrants and immigration policies**

Over the years, scholars have been preoccupied with the question of why societies, and individuals, have developed negative attitudes toward foreigners. Ethnic exclusionism became more salient as the waves of immigration expanded, becoming a controversial public matter. These exclusionary attitudes toward minorities are generally expressed by a majority group (in group) who perceive the minority group members (out group) as undeserving and who wish to limit their basic rights or public goods and a conflict between the groups is inevitable (Coenders & Scheepers, 2003). Out group members may be part of the immigration population, refugees or resident ethnic groups (Coenders, 2001), and the conflict can be between citizens versus non-citizens, national language speakers versus foreign language speakers, majority ethnic group members versus minority ethnic group members (King, 2001).

Over the past four decades, scholars used data from single country analysis, cross-national research and comparative study of countries, relying on both structural and individual level theories in order to explain this phenomenon. Findings often related to either group dynamics (e.g.- group conflict theory; Meuleman, Davidov, & Billiet, 2009; Fitzgerald, Curtis, & Corliss, 2011) or individual characteristics (e.g., socio-demographic factors; McLaren, 2003; Wilkes, Guppy, & Farris, 2008). Other scholars combined both levels and focused on the role of symbolic interests such as values and personal identification with a group (Davidov, Meuleman, Billiet & Schmidt, 2008; Sides & Citrin, 2007).

Structural level theories tested structural conditions as potential explanations for negative ATI. A decline in the economic conditions in the country (Coenders et al. 2008; Semyonov, Rajzman & Gorodzeisky 2008), the size of the immigrant population (Blalock, 1967; Quillian,

1995, Semyonov, Raijman, Yom Tov & Schmidt, 2004), and the visibility of the minority group (Semyonov et al. 2006, 2008; Schneider, 2008) are examples of structural level factors that were found to predict negative ATI.

Studies that focused on explanations for negative attitudes toward immigration policies were less conclusive. Local demographic conditions were found to have some impact on policy attitudes, especially at times when the issue of immigration was nationally salient (Hopkins, 2010), while country level economic conditions were not proven to predict policy attitudes (Sides & Cirtin, 2007). Focusing on the specific questions used in those studies we find obscure questions. Using the ESS and CID surveys, Citrin & Sides (2007) for example, tested for immigration attitudes while including measures of immigration's perceived consequences<sup>1</sup>. Hopkins (2010) who used the 2006 Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey (SCCBS) used questions about the potential effects of tightening border security on illegal immigration and whether or not the levels of immigration should be increased or decreased<sup>2</sup>.

Theories grounded in micro, individual-level explanations, examined socioeconomic conditions (income, education level, political views, gender, age, etc.) as predictors to ATI and ATIP. Specifically, negative ATIP were found to be affected by lower levels of education since people with lower levels of education are concerned about the potential labor market competition from low-skilled immigrants (Mayda 2006; O'Rourke & Sinnott 2006). Yet similarly to the studies that focused on structural level explanations, these observational studies primarily employ general, high-quality survey data that were not collected specifically to study immigration attitudes (Mayda, 2006 used the ISSP (1995) National Identity module (ISSP-NI) survey and the third wave of the World Value Survey (WVS); O'Rourke & Sinnott, 2006 used the 1995 International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) survey; Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007 used the Cognitive Styles Survey (CSS)). As a result, they typically use a limited number of pre-existing measures, focusing on

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<sup>1</sup> Sides & Cirtin (2007)'s questions regarding immigration: "'Taxes': 'Most people who come to live in [country] work and pay taxes. They also use health and social services. On balance, do you think people who come here take out more than they put in or put in more than they take out?'; 'Culture': 'And would you say that [country's] cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?'; 'Crime': 'In general, do you think that [country's] crime problems are made worse or better by people coming to live here from other countries?'" , p. 42-43.

<sup>2</sup> Tightening border security to prevent illegal immigration? (Would you like to see spending increased or decreased?) and Do you think the number of immigrants to America nowadays should be increased a lot, increased a little, remain the same as it is, reduced a little, or reduced a lot?

general questions about preferred levels of legal and illegal immigration (Mayda, 2006<sup>3</sup>; O'Rourke & Sinnott, 2006<sup>4</sup>; Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007<sup>5</sup>).

### **Attitudes toward asylum policies**

Attitudes toward asylum policies (ATAP), can be placed on an attitude continuum between support for an exclusionary government policy and support for a more accepting government policy. Exclusionary policy aims to prevent asylum seekers entering a given territory illegally or deters them from doing so and seeks to prevent granting several rights. While an accepting government policy is more tolerant to the asylum population, legal and illegal (Ceobanu & Escandell 2010; Meuleman et al. 2009; Raijman, Semyonov & Schmidt 2003; Louis et al. 2010).<sup>6</sup> Empirically, we see a growing body of study regarding attitudes toward asylum seekers (see Markus, 2010; McKay, Thomas, & Kneebone, 2012 for the effects of low socio-economic conditions; Hatton, 2015 and Nickerson & Louis, 2008 for the effects of political views' and McKay, Thoman & Kneebone, 2012 for the effects of media portrayal of asylum seekers on negative attitudes toward asylum seekers), yet we found very little research has addressed ATAP. We found one study, completed in Australia, which discovered that models of intergroup hostility and prejudice influenced peoples' willingness to restrict the access of asylum seekers to their nation and its resources (Louis, Duck, Terry, Schuller & Lalonde, 2007). Given the important role social and political context play in peoples' behavior, we focus on the effects of exposure to

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<sup>3</sup> **ISSP (1995) National Identity module (ISSP-NI) survey** :“Do you think the number of immigrants to [respondent's country] nowadays should be: (a) reduced a lot, (b) reduced a little, (c) remain the same as it is, (d) increased a little, or (e) increased a lot.6 Besides the five ordered answers, the survey format also allows for “can't choose” (CC) and “not available” (NA)”.

<sup>4</sup> **1995 International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) survey**: (a) The number of immigrants to their economy should be increased a lot (1), a little (2), remain the same (3), be reduced a little (4) or reduced a lot (5); (b) Should refugees be allowed to stay in the country; responses ran from agree strongly (1) to disagree strongly (5).

<sup>5</sup> **Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007** an experimental study yet asked each group with one of two versions of the survey question about immigration: Version 1: Do you agree or disagree that the US should allow more *highly skilled* immigrants from other countries to come and live here?; Version 2: Do you agree or disagree that the US should allow more *low-skilled* immigrants from other countries to come and live here?; Answer options (both versions): 1. Strongly disagree; 2. Somewhat disagree; 3. Neither agree nor disagree; 4. Somewhat agree; 5. Strongly agree.

<sup>6</sup> Gorodziiski and Semyonov (2009), for example, distinguished between two types of support in exclusionary attitude in regard to immigrants. The first is support for a general exclusionary policy of immigrants from the society, namely support in exclusion of all non-citizens. The second is support for an exclusionary policy that does not allow the provision of equal rights to these immigrants.

political violence on negative attitudes toward minorities, and specifically on support in exclusionist asylum policies.

### **Exposure to political violence**

The “securitization of migration” discourse included studies that measured the effects of exposure to violent conflict and terrorist acts on exclusionist attitudes toward minorities. It has been found that random terrorist acts that hurt civilians and disrupt the daily routine add a lot of tension to their already existing fear. It also helps foment rage against members of minorities groups, including those not necessarily connected to the violent events (Hobfoll, Canetti-Nisim, Johnson, Palieri, Varley and Galea, 2008; Canetti-Nisim, Halperin, Sharvit and Hobfoll, 2009). Political views were also found to be affected by exposure to conflict and could lead to support in exclusionary policies (Canetti – Nisim et al. 2009).

Few studies from the last decade have investigated the effects of random terrorist attacks (an increasingly frequent occurrence) on ATI - especially toward Muslim immigrants. These studies also examined the role of perceptions of threat in this relationship, mainly security threats from migrants (Facchinu and Mayda, 2012; Lahav & Courtemanch, 2012). No studies that we are aware of, have documented the effects of life under prolonged conflict on attitudes toward a minority group (in this case asylum seekers) that is not directly involved in the conflict.

At this intersection between terrorism and massive numbers of people asking asylum and refuge new situations are being created, which in turn raise new questions.

The Israeli case offers a rich and valuable opportunity to conduct a study of the relationship between exposure to political violence and exclusionist attitudes toward asylum policies.

### **Asylum Seekers in Israel**

Between the years 2005 and 2016, approximately 64,371<sup>7</sup> migrants, most of them from Sudan and Eritrea, entered Israel, mainly by crossing the country’s border with Egypt (Population and Immigration Authority, Israeli foreign data, 2016<sup>8</sup>). In the first few years of this new phenomenon, Israel, a latecomer host state for asylum seekers, refrained from deporting both

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<sup>7</sup> 11,361 asylum seekers have left Israel between 2013-2016 as part of the countries policy named ‘voluntarily desertion’( this will be discussed in this chapter).

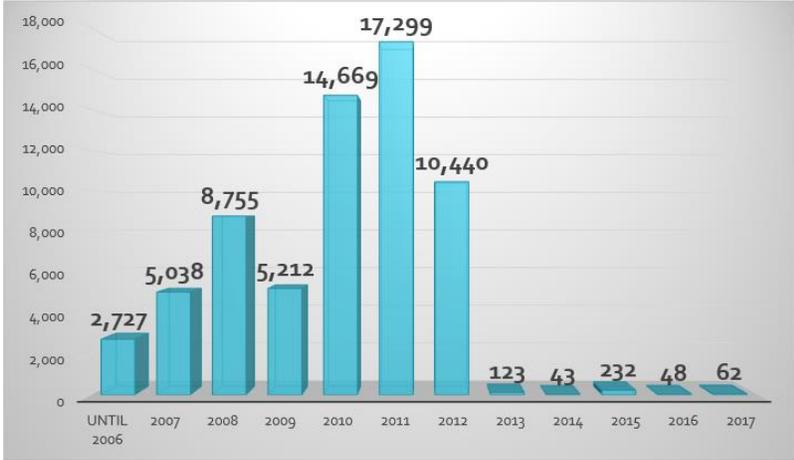
<sup>8</sup> The data is corrected to 31.3.16 - According to the Population and Immigration Authority - visited May 5, 2016 [https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/reports/foreign\\_workers\\_report\\_q1\\_2016/he/Q1\\_2016\\_0.pdf](https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/reports/foreign_workers_report_q1_2016/he/Q1_2016_0.pdf)

Sudanese and Eritrean nationals back across the border because of the dire situation in their home countries, and because of the UNHCR’s designation of Eritreans as a group in need of temporary humanitarian protection.<sup>9</sup> At first, Israel almost automatically granted all Sudanese and Eritrean migrants temporary permission to stay in the country, but at the same time did not give them work permits or access to social benefits.

By 2010, more than 36,000 asylum seekers were living in the poorer neighborhoods of south Tel Aviv and in southern Israeli cities (especially Eilat and Arad) and the indifference of the Israeli public and government gradually began to fade away. The situation became impossible to ignore and the local municipalities were no longer able to cope without an official asylum policy. As the asylum seekers’ presence became more conspicuous in particular areas, local tensions began to surface, and the issue entered the public agenda.

Between the years 2000 - 2016 the Israeli government gradually formed an asylum policy. This policy was developed during different administrations, based on ad hoc decisions, rules, regulations and procedures that were more frequently than not inconsistent and rushed. Yet the official purpose of the policy was always to deter attempts to enter Israel - deterrence has taken the form of prolonged periods in detention in Israel, no work permits or housing conditions.

**Figure 1: Numbers of asylum seekers arriving to Israel 2006-2017**



As mentioned before the symbiotic relations between the policy makers and the public is the base of this entire study. Hence it was not surprising to learn that the discourse regarding the

<sup>9</sup> Israel and Eritrea have diplomatic ties. Israel has no diplomatic relations with Sudan, and relations between the two are hostile.

asylum seekers phenomenon transformed from one indifferent to a declared anti-asylum one, especially as the numbers of asylum seekers grew dramatically and the community's members became more and more visible in Israel. At that point more and more references to the members of the African group included terms such as 'illegality,' 'otherness,' and 'dangerousness.' One of the main examples of the negative nature of the Israeli discourse is the common term for members of this group, which is 'infiltrators.' An 'infiltrator' is a term coined in the 1950s to describe terrorists from Arab countries who entered Israel illegally, aiming to carry out attacks on Israeli citizens. Hence, in the eyes of Israelis the term 'infiltrator' associates Eritrean and Sudanese citizens with a national security threat. This in turn, feeds into demographic anxieties related to the preservation of Israel as a Jewish-majority State (Ziegler, 2015).

Over the years the tension between the two groups became stronger. More and more cases of the involvement of 'infiltrators' in criminal activities were reported in the media, which gradually grew along with the demands of residents of the southern neighborhoods of Tel Aviv for the government to address the situation. Also, as the discourse became more aggressive, incidents of violence against asylum seekers and migrant workers became more common. Within the Israeli society, groups were organizing against asylum seekers, aiming to raise awareness of the situation in the southern neighborhoods of Tel Aviv. They lobbied the issue among politicians, offered tours in the neighborhoods to show how serious the situation was and coordinated demonstrations against the situation. Within the asylum seekers society groups of asylum seekers organized several demonstrations against the Israeli policy. While receiving support and help from various human rights NGO's activities. Several nonprofit human rights organizations operate in Israel and offer help to the asylum seeker community. These organizations offer its help in legal aid, humanitarian assistance and raising public awareness of refugees and asylum seekers in Israel.

### **The Israeli–Palestinian Conflict as Context**

The arrival of approximately 70,000 foreigners, different in race, language and culture, and from predominantly Muslim countries, added tension to an already complicated political landscape. The most recent chapter in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict was the 2014 Israel-Gaza war (also known as Operation Protective Edge), which lasted from July 7 until August 26, 2014. During the fighting, militants in Gaza launched a relentless barrage of rocket attacks that potentially threatened all Israeli communities within a geographical range. The daily routine of

Israeli society was continuously disrupted in the areas near Gaza, all social programs within 40 km of Gaza were cancelled such as summer camps and afternoon activities. Universities canceled their final exams, and people were requested to stay at home or near bomb shelters, and to avoid gatherings of 300 or more people. An estimated 5,000 to 8,000<sup>10</sup> citizens temporarily fled their homes due to the threat of rocket fire from Gaza. The random nature of the rocket attacks has resulted in few casualties but has provoked widespread fear among the Israeli populace within range (Palmieri et al., 2008).

### **Study 1**

Study 1 was conducted immediately after the 2014 war ended and provided us the opportunity to test the role of exposure to violence while building a validation procedure for the ATAP.

### **Method**

In this study, we measured exposure to political violence by using geographic variations of exposure to the Israeli – Palestinian conflict by creating two different areas Cold and Hot (the Cold area as a far area from the rocket range from Gaza, and the Hot area which is an area within the rockets range where people are highly exposed to the violence). We sampled participants from two academic institutions located in areas that differ in their levels of exposure to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: Sapir college<sup>11</sup> (Hot) and the University of Haifa<sup>12</sup> (Cold). Sapir College is set near the city of Sderot, which is located one kilometer east of Gaza Strip, and faced a constant rocket threats since 2001<sup>13</sup>. The University of Haifa is set in the city of Haifa, located 147.8 kilometers from the Gaza Strip. It was not affected by the Israel-Gaza war in 2014.

Although the two populations differ in socio-economic and demographic characteristics, we did not attempt to equalize these populations in order to retain the varying profiles of the two

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<sup>10</sup> Heller, Aron (6 August 2014). "Southern Israelis cautiously prepare to head home". *Associated Press*. Retrieved 4 April 2016. <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/southern-israelis-cautiously-prepare-head-home>

<sup>11</sup> Sapir College (1998) is situated in the northern Negev, next to the city of Sderot, with over 8,500 students who reside in its outlying areas such as Ashdod, Be'er Sheva, Kiryat Gat and Eshkol and settlements in the south-west.

<sup>12</sup> The University of Haifa (1972) is situated atop Mount Carmel, with over 18,000 students attending it. The population is diverse including the largest number of military and security personnel Jewish, Haredi and secular students, new immigrants, Arabs and Druze.

<sup>13</sup> Like many towns in the western Negev – a region in the South of Israel, the Sapir college suffered continued rocket threats from terrorist organizations nearby. Over 2000 rockets were fired at the college, some landed within the campus area, while others were direct hits. In 2007 a student was injured by a rocket attack and in 2008 a rocket attack killed a student.

institutions. Thus, our analysis need to provide a preliminary explanation as to what extent socio-economic differences rather than exposure measurements are responsible for differences in attitudinal response. Questionnaires were distributed by the first author of this study, and her assistant in random classes that they received authorizations to do so.

## Participants

The goal of this sampling strategy was to build two similar-in-size comparative groups based on different levels of exposure – students attending the University of Haifa, located in a Cold area and students of Sapir College, located in Hot area with respect to the Israel-Gaza war. Eligible subjects had to be Jewish Israelis, over the age of 18. The groups were similar in age range, political ideology, income, education, levels of religiosity and family status. We found differences in gender distribution between the two groups – the Haifa group (n=158) represented a majority of women 56.3% (n=89) while in the Sapir group (n=150) only 38.3% were women (n=57). To limit the impact of gender it was included as a control variable. However, when tested in the models, it was not significantly related to any variable of interest and thus removed from the final analyses presented here. Background characteristics of both groups are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summary Statistics and Variable Descriptions, Cold/Hot Groups**

	<b>Cold Area</b> Freq.; Percent	<b>Hot Area</b> Freq.; Percent	<b>All</b> Freq.; Percent	$\chi^2$ , df, p
<b>Gender</b>				10.04, 1, $p < .005$
Female	89; 56.3	57; 38.3	146; 47.6	
Male	69; 43.7	92; 61.7	161; 52.4	
All	158; 100	149; 100	307; 100	
<b>Political Ideology</b>				
Right	48; 42.9	75; 68.2	123; 55.4	
Center	40; 35.7	29; 26.4	69; 31.1	
Left	24; 21.4	6; 5.5	30; 13.5	
All	112; 100	110; 100	222; 1000	18.646, 2, $p < .000$
Age (Mean, STD)	25.92, 5.59	31.26, 7.19		t (298) = -7.17, $p < .001$
<b>Family Status</b>				
Single	108; 68.4	58; 39.5	166; 54.4	
Married	32; 20.3	78; 53.1	110; 36.1	
Divorced	6; 3.8	7; 4.8	13; 4.3	
With Partner	12; 7.6	4; 2.7	16; 5.2	
All	158; 100	147; 100	305; 100	38.026, 3, $p < .000$
<b>Education</b>				
Elementary	2; 1.3	2; 1.3	4	1.3
High School	40; 26.0	20; 13.4	60; 19.8	
Above high school	37; 24.0	32; 21.5	69; 22.8	
Academic	75; 48.7	95; 63.8	170; 56.1	
All	154; 100	149; 100	303; 100	9.302, 3, $p < .005$

	<b>Cold Area</b> Freq.; Percent	<b>Hot Area</b> Freq.; Percent	<b>All</b> Freq.; Percent	$\chi^2$ , df, p
<b>Religiosity</b>				
Secular	108;69.2	68; 46.9	176;58.5	
Traditional	37; 23.7	56;38.6	93;30.9	
Religious	11; 7.1	20; 13.8	31; 10.3	
Ultra-religious	0	1; 0.7	1; 0.3	
All	156; 100	145; 100	301; 100	16.205, 3, $p < .001$

## Measures

**Attitudes toward asylum policies.** The search to find a set of questions to measure ATAP included a long investigation. At the peak of the phenomenon, when African asylum seekers were still living in the streets of Tel Aviv and the Israeli asylum policy was at its early stages of formation, we distributed preliminary questionnaires asking a variety of questions regarding the asylum phenomenon. Findings from these pilots enabled us to differentiate between different terms and concepts (e.g. the different terms residents of Tel Aviv used to name asylum seekers ('mistanenim', infiltrators) compared to the terms used by human right activists (asylum seekers/refugees). We also tested a new set of relevant questions during those pilots. These questions were earlier phrased and reshaped by small panels of experts and line citizens.

Out of 14 original questions we developed a scale of 11 items, reducing problematic questions (we left the original numbers of the questions as they were initially. Therefore, the numbers of the questions in the scale are not presented in a sequential order).

Based on that process, participants in the current study, were asked to rank on a 1 (*not at all*) to 6 (*very much*) Likert scale to what extent they agreed with several statements regarding asylum policies in Israel. Questions 1 – 5, 7- 9 and 14 were adjusted to the asylum policy conducted by the Israeli government in the last few years that measured the public attitudes regarding deportation, detention, social services and welfare and employment. Question 6 and 10-12 captured a universal range of policies and were adopted from the ESS 59.2, 2002. These surveys have been conducted by the European Commission since 1971 and refer to several issues related to employment in the European Union, mostly regarding immigration and asylum seekers.

Questions 1, and 4 refer to Israel's detention policy; question 1 asked participants whether the state should send infiltrators/asylum seekers to detention for a period of three years at least - men, women and children (first change of the Prevention of Infiltration Law, January 2012). Question 2 asked whether all infiltrators/asylum seekers should be arrested and sent to a closed

facility indefinitely (Second change of the law, after The Supreme Court ruled the amendment to be violating the right of “infiltrators” to liberty and ordered the immediate release of all detainees). Question 4 asked whether infiltrators/asylum seekers should be allowed to walk freely in Israel. Question 5 inquired whether it is appropriate to financially encourage infiltrators/asylum seekers to return home (Voluntarily desertion - Israeli government encourages infiltrators to leave the country by providing grant funds for those leaving at the amount of \$ 3,500). Question 7 dealt with the subject of deportation of infiltrators/asylum seekers – is deporting them to their countries of origin, as long as the security situation does not allow it, an impermissible act?<sup>14</sup>

Questions 8 and 13 referred to the matter of employment. Question 8 asked about policy that fines employers of asylum seekers (was implemented in 2010) and question 13 asked, should Israel allow infiltrators/asylum seekers to work as long as it is impossible to send them back to their country. Question 9 referred to the state’s obligation to provide social services and welfare to infiltrators/asylum seekers. Questions 4-7, 9, 11 and 13 were reversed. Question 6 and 10-12 captured a universal range of policies, and the public attitude regarding issues like the matter of shelter as a basic human right (10), as humans should they be allowed to assimilate into the Israeli society (6), should all international borders be canceled (11) whether this group of people should be treated humanely (12).

## Procedure and Analyses

**Factor Analysis.** In order to determine which groups of items constitute a unidimensional set we run an exploratory factor analysis (EFA, Principal Axis Factoring with Promax rotation) to detect the full dimensions of this new survey instrument. Results show two main factors as presented in Table 1. The confirmatory factor analysis for these two latent factors with minor modifications yielded high fit quality (CFI=.95 TLI=.93, RMSEA=.06,  $\chi^2=120.22$ ,  $df=59$ ,  $p<.001$ ). These results confirmed the use of the two attitude indices beyond the uniform and distinct context of each factor. A test of correlation between the two indices showed significant correlation yet not too high ( $r=.55$ ,  $p<.001$ ) that confirmed the use of the two indices separately.

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<sup>14</sup> **Deportation.** In January 2012, Interior Minister Eli Yishai, declared that the collective protection Israel gave to asylum seekers from South Sudan has come to its end and that they will be deported back to their country. The deportation took place in June 2012 with the Supreme Court’s rejection of the petitions filed by human rights organizations against the decision.

**Table 2: Exploratory Factor Analysis Results of ATAP Scale**

	Factor	
	1	2
Policy Attitude1 Should the state send infiltrators/asylum seekers to detention for a period of three years at least - men, women and children	.894	.076
Policy Attitude 2 Should all infiltrators/asylum seekers be arrested and sent to a closed facility indefinitely	.869	.124
Policy Attitude 8 Is it necessary to policy to stricken the enforcement of fines against employers of infiltrators/asylum seekers?	.462	-.043
Policy Attitude14 Should infiltrators/asylum seekers only be given water and food?	.458	.010
Policy Attitude 9 Is it the state's obligation to provide social services and welfare to infiltrators/asylum seekers?	-.098	.687
Policy Attitude 7 Does deporting them to their countries of origin, as long as the security situation does not allow it - is an impermissible act?	-.169	.594
Policy Attitude 13 Should Israel allow infiltrators/asylum seekers to work as long as it is impossible to send them back to their country?	-.207	.571
Policy Attitude 4 Should infiltrators/asylum seekers be allowed to walk freely in Israel	-.074	.552
Policy Attitude 6 Are the infiltrators/ asylum seekers humans like us and should be allowed to assimilate into the Israeli society?	-.263	.541
Policy Attitude 5 Is it appropriate to financially encourage infiltrators/asylum seekers to return home	.398	.488
Policy Attitude 11 Should all international borders be canceled?	.082	.385

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization. CFI=.95 TLI=.93, RMSEA=.06, CHI-SQUARED=120.22, df=59,  $p < .001$

## Results

As a result of our analysis two dimensions of policy attitude were identified: the first dimension consisted of four questions: 1, 2, 8 14 (Alpha= 0.736) and captured the participants' attitudes regarding more preventive measures the policy deals with such as detention, providing them only water and food and punish those who employ them. The dimension will be referred to as a preventive policy dimension.

The second dimension consist of seven questions (Alpha = 0.821) 9r, 7r 13r 4r 6r, 5r 11r 13r (Alpha.821) that capture issues of asylum policies that deals with them inside the country,

should they be deported while the situation in their country is not safe, should they be treated humanely and so forth. The dimension will be referred to as an accommodation policy dimension.

### **Discussion**

The results of Study 1 offered support for the conceptual distinctiveness of the ATAP scale. In addition, the factor analyses revealed unique subscales of asylum policies - preventive accommodation policies. The preventive subscale emerged as an important dimension that captured attitudes regarding a more deterring measure of the asylum policy in order to prevent asylum seekers from entering the country. Whereas the accommodation subscale deals with policies aimed formulate ways of dealing with asylum seekers as they already entered the country.

Cross-validation of initial scale development findings in an independent sample is strongly recommended to provide a fuller test of the replicability of a subscale's factor structure (e.g., Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994, p. 333). Therefore, Study 2 was conducted to further evaluate the ATAP scale.

## **Study 2**

### **Method**

Participants were randomly drawn from the Midgam Panel, a large online Israeli survey pool in July 2016. Eligible subjects had to be Jewish Israelis, over the age of 18 who lived in the specific surveyed city/town at least 2 years. Out of 705 questionnaires, 646 participants (318 from high exposure areas (Hot) and 328 from low exposure areas (Cold)) took part in this study. Participants were sampled from six different cities and towns, forming two groups:

**Group 1: Hot Area** consisted of the cities with high exposure to the 2014 war rockets range: Ashkelon<sup>15</sup>, Ashdod<sup>16</sup>, Beer Sheva<sup>17</sup>; as well as the smaller cities: Ofakim<sup>18</sup>, Sderot<sup>19</sup> and Netivot<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Ashkelon Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/166\\_7100.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/166_7100.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Ashdod Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications14/local\\_authorities12\\_1573/pdf/147\\_0070.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications14/local_authorities12_1573/pdf/147_0070.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Be'er Sheva Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/174\\_9000.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/174_9000.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Ofakim Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/138\\_0031.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/138_0031.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Sderot Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/426\\_1031.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/426_1031.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Netivot Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/326\\_0246.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/326_0246.pdf)

**Cold Area** consists of the cities with low exposure to the 2014 war rockets range: Netanya<sup>21</sup>, Hadera<sup>22</sup>, Haifa<sup>23</sup> and well as the smaller cities: Migdal Emek<sup>24</sup>, Or Kiva<sup>25</sup> and Beit Shean<sup>26</sup>. We used the second group as a quasi-control for the first group. All of the cities in this area are within over 100 kilometers from the Gaza Strip.

Overall, the groups are as similar as possible regarding the two-population size and socio-economic parameters yet have faced varying exposure to violence conditions such a rocket fire from the Gaza Strip and terrorist attacks carried out by Palestinians. A comparison between the two areas is presented in Table 3, regarding distances from the Gaza Strip, level of exposure to the 2014 war and the socio – economic cluster of each city. We used the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics’ socio-economic clusters index that uses multiple demographics such as income, education, religion, sex and ranks cities and regional councils in the ranking between 1-10.

**Table 3: Demographic Characteristics by Level of Exposure to the Israel-Gaza War<sup>27</sup> and Place of Residence, Cold /Hot Groups**

Hot Area: High Exposed					Cold Area: Non-Exposed				
Name of City/Town	Total Population	Socio - Econ Level	Km/M from Gaza	N/% of Siren alerts <sup>28</sup>	Name of City/Town	Total Population	Socio-Econ level	Km/M from Gaza	N
Ashkelon	140 126,819	5	14/8.5	154 (3.3%)	Hadera	150 86,774	6	67/11	0
Ashdod	130 271,959	5	30/19	136 (3%)	Netanya	140 202,428	6	99/61	0
Be'er Sheva	140 201,100	5	39/24	92 (2%)	Haifa	130 277,100	7	144/90	1
Sderot	160 22,474	4	3/2	131 (2.8%)	Beit Shean	160 17,273	5	147/92	0

<sup>21</sup> Netanya Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/330\\_7400.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/330_7400.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Hadera Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/218\\_6500.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/218_6500.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Haifa Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/226\\_4000.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/226_4000.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> Migdal Haemek Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/286\\_0874.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/286_0874.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Or Akiva Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/146\\_1020.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/146_1020.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> Beit Shean Profile, CBS website: [http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local\\_authorities14\\_1642/pdf/178\\_9200.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications16/local_authorities14_1642/pdf/178_9200.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> During 50 days of fighting 4594 rockets and Mortars were fire towards Israel, 3,641 felt inside the territory of Israel and 188 in the Gaza strip. 735 rockets and Mortars were intercepted by the Iron Dome. Statistical data on operation ‘Protective Edge’ - based on the IDF Spokesperson announcements <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AqLhz84IMCvopizH52MPKb8gsbLEuBF7U2rk51tFXw/edit#gid=0>; Rotter. Net: <http://rotter.net/forum/scoops1/135166.shtml>

<sup>28</sup> Out of total of 4,594 siren alarms

Netivot	160 30,300	3	15/9	55 (1.2%)	Or Akiva	170 16,756	5	120/75	0
Ofakim	160 25,295	¾	25/16	73 (1.5%)	Migdal Ha'Emek	160 24,766	5	150/93	0

Source: Israeli Bureau of Statistics, 2014 data.

## Participants

The goal of this sampling strategy was to build two similar comparative groups with respect to population size and socio demographic characteristics that are different in their levels of exposure to the 2014 war and to the political violence since the war. The two groups: Hot (n=318) and Cold (n=328) are similar in age range, political ideology, income, education and family status, see Table 4 for background characteristic comparisons across the two groups. Yet we found differences in levels of religiosity between the two groups ( $\chi^2=15.931$ ,  $p<0.005$ ), that is, the hot group is somewhat more religious than the cold group. To limit the impact of religiosity, we included this variable as a control variable in the preliminary models. However, when tested in these models, it was not significantly related to any variable of interest and thus removed from the final analyses presented hereafter.

**Table 4: Background Characteristics: Hot/Cold Geographic Groups**

	Cold Freq.; Percent	Hot Freq.; Percent	All Freq.; Percent	$\chi^2$ , df, p
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	179; 54.6	149; 45.4	344; 53.3	
Male	165; 51.9	153; 48.1	302; 46.7	
All	382; 100	318; 100	646; 100	.468, 1, $p=.494$
<b>Political Ideology</b>				
Right	176; 53.7	185; 58.2	361; 55.9	
Centre	122; 37.2	108; 34	230; 35.6	
Left	30; 9.1	25; 7.9	55; 8.5	
All	328; 100	318; 100	646; 100	1.37, 2, $p=.502$
Age (Mean, STD)				
<b>Family Status</b>				
Single	95; 29	108; 34	203; 31.4	
Married	194; 59.1	176; 55.3	370; 57.3	
Divorced	21; 6.4	15; 4.7	36; 5.6	
Widower	2; 0.6	1; 0.3	3; 0.5	
With Partner	16; 4.9	18; 5.7	34; 5.3	
All	328; 100	318; 100	646; 100	3.005, 4, $p=.557$
<b>Education</b>				
Elementary	0; 0	2; 0.6	2; 0.3	
High School	76; 23.2	77; 24.2	153; 23.7	

Above high school	63; 19.2	81; 25.5	144; 22.3	
Academic (BA)	142; 43.3	119; 37.4	261; 40.4	
Academic (MA+)	47; 14.3	39; 12.3	86; 13.3	
All	328; 100	318; 100	646; 100	6.874, 4, $p=.143$
<b>Religiosity</b>				
Secular	188; 57.3	146; 45.9	334; 51.7	
Traditional	72; 22	86; 27	158; 24.5	
Religious	48; 14.6	43; 13.5	91; 14.1	
Very religious	6; 1.8	8; 2.5	14; 2.2	
Ultra-religious	14; 4.3	35; 11	49; 7.6	
All	328; 100	318; 100	646; 100	15.931, 4, $p=.003$
<b>Income</b>				
A lot below average	50; 15.2	55; 17.3	105; 16.3	
Below average	64; 19.5	88; 27.7	152; 23.5	
Similar to average	115; 35.1	102; 32.1	217; 33.6	
Above average	86; 26.2	65; 20.4	151; 23.4	
Much above average	13; 4	8; 2.5	21; 3.3	
All	328; 100	318; 100	646; 100	8.765, 4, $p=.067$

## Measures

**Attitudes Toward Asylum Policies (ATAP)** were assessed by a 10 items scale, similar to the scale that was developed and validated in Study 1. The few exceptions were: question 7 was adjusted according to a new debated asylum policy regarding deportation of asylum seekers to a third country: “All asylum seekers/ infiltrations should be deported to Rwanda.” Questions 11 and 14 (that were adopted from the ESE 59.2, 2002) were replaced by question 6 – “The right to asylum is a basic human right” (also adopted from the ESE 59.2, 2002).

### Procedure and analyses

The statistical validation included an exploratory factor analysis (EFA, Maximum Likelihood Extraction with Promax Rotation) to detect the full dimensions of this new survey instrument and to ensure these dimensions follow what was found earlier. Results show two main factors with loading values greater than .30. The confirmatory factor analysis for these two latent factors with minor modifications yielded high fit quality (CFI=.96, TLI=.95, RMSEA=.07, CHI-SQUARED=150.88, df=33,  $p<.001$ ). These results confirmed the use of the two dimensions of ATAP indices beyond the uniform and distinct context of each factor. A test of correlation between the two indices showed significant correlation yet not too high ( $r=.55$ ,  $p<.001$ ) that confirmed the use of the two indices separately.

## Results

Table 5 reports the results of this comparison separately for Study 1 and Study 2. In Study 1 this test failed to assume equal structure of the policy attitudes the two different populations from Haifa and Sapir institute showed. However, Study 2 that compared the actual populations from the hot and the cold regions showed no significant differences in terms of the structure of the two attitudinal factors.

**Table 5: Measurement Invariance Test Results for the Comparison Between Cold/Hot Samples**

Model	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	$\chi^2$ , p Df	2 vs. 1 $\Delta\chi^2$	3 vs. 1 $\Delta\chi^2$	3 vs. 2 $\Delta\chi^2$
Study 1: Haifa/Sapir							
1.Configural	.942	.924	.065	195.76*** 118	26.92** 11	40.84** 22	13.91 11
2.Metric	.931	.916	.069	222.69*** 129			
3.Scalar	.928	.920	.067	236.59*** 140			
Study 2: Hot/Cold							
1.Configural				293.06*** 68	5.17 8	11.88 16	6.71 8
2.Metric				298.23*** 76			
3.Scalar				304.94*** 84			

This complements the confirmatory results across all respondents. We can conclude that both populations' attitudes toward public policies regarding asylum seekers are not different in their structure.

## Discussion

We argue that the relationship between governments/policy makers and the public is important to the understanding of the formulation of policies. The public is influenced by the policy governments set and governments are interested knowing whether they are in step with the opinion of the public on specific issues, allowing for public-driven changes in policy (Brett and Moran 2006). Hence, we see of great necessity to learn more about the public attitudes toward asylum policies.

The extensive literature on the immigration phenomenon has examined exclusionary attitudes toward immigrants and immigration policies in many ways. Yet, the majority of the

studies focused on public views toward immigrants and much less focus was given to attitudes toward asylum policies (Ceobanu & Escandell, 2010; Meuleman et al., 2009). Studies that measured negative ATIP typically use a limited number of pre-existing measures, focusing on general questions about preferred levels of legal and illegal immigration (Mayda, 2006; O'Rourke & Sinnott, 2006; Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007). From an empirical perspective, the lack of a clear distinction between ATI and ATIP, made it difficult to find a proper set of questions that address the ATAP.

Our goal in the current paper was to fill an empirical and theoretical gap in the literature regarding attitudes toward asylum policy per se. We believe that the scale developed over two empirical studies, and its two dimensions, can help evaluate people's support in the two aspects of the government's action. Results from the current study indicate the potential importance of dimensions of asylum policies that assess two sub aspects – one is dealing with measures to prevent asylum seekers from coming into a country – such as the threat of detention, lack of work and harsh conditions. The latter applying to the conditions within the country during the time of their stay.

It is important to note that despite the innovation of this scale, this is a preliminary research and that more research is needed in certain aspects of the research. First, the scale was built and validated only in regard to the Jewish Israeli society that has its unique characteristics. It will be interesting to examine the validity and reliability of the scale in other Western countries that host asylum seekers and refugees. Second, it is essential to investigate the relationship between this scale that capture attitude toward asylum policies and attitudes toward the asylum group and learn the differences between them.

This research project bears relevance beyond the borders of Israel. The “securitization of migration” discourse is prevalent worldwide and acts of political violence are seen everywhere at any time. We believe it is important to have an effective tool to measure exclusionist attitudes, and although we used Israeli asylum policies, to formulate these questions, this measurement could be of use elsewhere, since those policies are common around the world. By breaking down the policy into sub dimensions and asking the public's opinion about them, we formulated a relevant and effective measurement.

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