# A quantitative study investigating the association between refugee's gender ideology and their sense of belonging in Germany

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# Abstract

**Background**: Following the "refugee crisis" in 2015/16 the German migration discourse has become more and more focused on the "incompatibility" of Islam with German society and associated "oppressive" gender roles "threatening" German culture. Gender ideologies assumed to be held by refugees are often used by right-wing groups, to questioning their belonging in Germany and to reinforce racist and Islamophobic narratives.

**Study Aim:** The aim of the following study is to examine the association between gender ideology and refugee´s sense of belonging in Germany. The study will assess the influence of a variety of aspects of integration, such as time spent with Germans, people from other countries and the refugees home country, as well as contact with Germans, German skills, employment status, marital status, religious affiliation, and residence status.

**Data and Methods**: 1625 refugees between the ages of 19 and 93, who took part on both the second (2017) and third (2018) of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Surveys for refugees, made up the sample used in the study. All participants arrived in Germany after 2013 and the majority had been granted a residence permit at the time of the survey. Univariate (Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Analysis) and Bivariate analysis (Pearson-Product Moment) was performed. To assess the association between Gender Equality and sense of belonging, a Hierarchical Regression Analysis was performed, controlling for the impact of different integration factors.

**Results and Discussion:** This study did not find any evidence that gender ideology of refugees is associated with their sense of belonging. Shared values are generally considered to be an important aspect of social belonging, but other markers of social integration, such as German skills, contact to Germans and religious affiliation, were found to be more important. Contrary to the belief held by populist groups, but supported by previous research, the study found that egalitarian gender ideologies were relatively widespread among the participants. Analysed from a political perspective, the study found, that it is the exclusionary discourse on gender ideology that is hindering social integration of refugees instead.

**Conclusion:** This study was able to illustrate, that from a subjective perspective gender ideology has no effect on refugees´ sense of belonging. The narrative that refugees' assumed gender ideology is the biggest obstacle in their integration process, is instrumentalising gender ideology, to push racist and Islamophobic narratives under the guise of protecting an imagined German culture and society. Future research may expand on the findings of the study by conducting a longitudinal perspective on how refugees' sense of belonging is changing over time, as well as implementing a more multidimensional framework of gender ideologies.

# Acronyms and Abbreviations

(A)CASI -(Audio) Computer-Assisted Self-Interview

AZR - Central Register of Foreigners

BA - Federal Employment Agency

BAMF-FZ - Research Centre of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees

CAPI - Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing

CSBS - Challenged Sense of Belonging Scale

CSS - Critical Social Science

DIW - German Institute for Economic Research

EU – European Union

IAB - Institute for Employment Research

ISSP - International Social Survey Programme

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goal

SOEP - German Socio-Economic Panel

SPSS - Statistical Packages for Social Sciences

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

Migration has always been a part of human history, but in the past decades, its importance in the political discourse has grown significantly (Castles et al. 2014). In an increasingly interconnected and globalized world migration has exponentially increased over the last decades from around 100 million people in 1960 (Castles et al. 2014) to 272 million people in 2019 (Desmond, 2020). Migration has over the past decades grown to be a more and more integral part of the development discourse and frameworks. While the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) do not dedicate a specific goal to migration, most out of the 17 goals relate in some form or other to migration (Desmond, 2020).

While the inclusion of migration into the SDGs can be seen as a milestone within the discourse, there are many areas of migration that are not covered in the SDGs and other international policies and frameworks. Refugees, as well as their unique rights and needs, are distinctly missing not only from the SDGs, but in consequence also from reports on the progress made by different countries. Out of the 47 refugee-hosting countries only 26 specifically mention refugees in their SDG-progress-report in 2020 (Van Den Hoek et al., 2021). And among the SDG-indicators only one refers to refugees directly (Van Den Hoek et al., 2021). Additionally, the focus of the SDGs is often on the country of origin rather than the host country (Van Den Hoek et al., 2021). This further illustrates a lack of attention towards refugees, leaving one of the most vulnerable groups and the difficult and complex process of integration largely unmentioned in international policies.

Around 40% of refugees are hosted in only five countries (UNHCR, n.d.). While Turkey is hosting the largest number of refugees with 3.7 million, Germany is the only European country on this list, hosting around 1.2 million people as of 2021 (UNHCR, n.d.). During the so-called "refugee-crisis"[1] between 2015 and 2017 Germany received around 1.15 million asylums applications, hosting about half of the overall refugee population arriving in the European Union (EU) during that time. With the influx of refugees after 2015, nationalistic and populist parties as well as racist attacks were on the rise all over Europe (Hess et al., 2016). Most refugees were coming from predominantly Muslim countries (BAMF, 2018), leading to a rise

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[1]Labelling the refugee situation as a ´crisis´ can be problematic, as it suggests, that refugees themselves are to blame for the situation they find themselves in, instead of focusing on the crisis of politics in dealing with the refugee situation. To acknowledge this, "refugee crisis" will be used in parenthesis throughout this study.

in Islamophobic and racist narratives in Germany (Hess et al., 2016). The claims made range from concerns over a "social, economic or 'civilisational' overload" (Hess et al., 2016, p.15), the fear of violent conflicts in overflowing refugee accommodations, to the allegedly overworked social systems and the threat of Islamist terror attacks brought to Germany by refugees from the Middle East (Hess et al., 2016). But the argument made most often is the construction of refugees, especially Muslims, as a threat to German culture as a whole and in extension leading to a breakdown of European culture and values (Hess et al., 2016). This idea of an incompatible difference in culture between refugees and the German population was and still is, mostly based on the claim that, while gender equality was suddenly seen as part of German cultural heritage, refugees not only hold opposing gender role values, but are essentially threatening gender equality in Germany (Hess et al., 2016). Over the years the German migration discourse has become more and more focused on Islam and accompanying narratives surrounding "traditional" gender roles (Fritzsche, 2016). The public and political discourse, debating the belonging or not belonging of Islam, Islamic values and Muslims to Germany, has only intensified in light of the "refugee crisis" in 2015/16 (SZ, 2018).

This questioning of belonging is often based in Islamophobic narratives, regarding the incompatibility of values, especially gender ideologies, with German culture. The portrayal of Muslims as inherently patriarchal and oppressive, was and still is used as the main reason, to make Muslims feel like they do not belong (Lutz, 2010). Especially the gender role values assumed to be held by refugees are constructed as a barrier of integration, a belief that has been held by right-wing groups for decades (Korteweg & Yurdakul 2014). The implication being, that the presumed absolute incompatibility of "German" and "Muslim" gender ideology, makes it impossible for Muslim refugees to ever belong to German society, without destroying it.

## 1.2. Study Aim

While belonging has a political dimension to it, it is first and foremost a subjective feeling (Allen et al., 2021). The aim of the following study is therefore to examine the influence gender ideology has on the sense of belonging of refugees in Germany, using secondary data from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Surveys for refugees. Additionally, the study will assess the influence a variety of external factors such as: time spent with Germans, people from other countries and the refugees home country, as well as contact with Germans, German Skills, employment status, marital status, religious affiliation, and residence status, have on the sense of belonging of refugees.

Throughout the study the term ´refugee` refers to the categorization made within the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey for refugees. The term is not used as in a juridical sense, but instead describes the following groups of people eligible to be included in the survey: Asylum seekers, people who have been granted a residence status and people, whose application for asylum was rejected, but whose deportation has been postponed (Kroh et al. 2016).

## 2. Theory

### 2.1. Gender Ideology

There are many terms used to describe the concept of gender ideology (Davis & Greenstein, 2009). Gender role attitudes, gender-related attitudes, or gender egalitarianism sound distinctly different, but usually describe the same concept of gender ideology (Davis & Greenstein, 2009). Gender Ideology is generally used to describe "[…] individuals´ levels of support for a division of paid work and family responsibilities that is based on this notion of separate spheres." (Davis & Greenstein, 2009, p.88). There are some debates concerning the one-dimensionality, when assessing gender ideology as a construct, but for clarity the term gender ideology will be used from now on.

In recent years there has been an increasing body of research working towards a more multidimensional understanding of gender ideologies (Grunnow et al. 2018). This includes the work by Kroska (2000), who developed "vignettes", each representing a distinct multidimensional attitude towards gender ideology. She reassesses the common classification of gender ideology as a belief system, rephrasing it as gender identity (Kroska, 2000). There is also the work of Grunow, Begall and Buchler (2018), who extend the previous unidimensional understanding of gender ideology, ranging from egalitarian to traditional, to a more multidimensional framework, which includes five different ideology profiles. This multidimensional framework is able to capture the reality of gender ideologies much closer than a more unidimensional approach. The framework includes three steps added between egalitarian and traditional ideologies (Grunnow et al., 2018). Those "classes" are the Egalitarian Essentialist Class, which describes support for the joint spheres of work but not caring, the Intensive Parenting Class, which supports joint spheres of care but not work and the Moderate Traditional Class, which is categorized by a low belief in the care ability of men (Grunnow et al., 2018).

In a less multidimensional understanding of gender ideology, the higher the support for the gendered separation of spheres regarding paid and unpaid work, the more traditional are the individual's beliefs about gender and gender equality. The sphere of paid work is here distinctly male, while caring and other unpaid housework is distinctly female (Grunnow et al., 2018). On the other hand, the higher the support for a less distinct and less gendered separation of those spheres, the more egalitarian are the beliefs held by the individual. Egalitarian beliefs tend to emphasize individual choices, while more traditional beliefs rely on gendered traits that predisposition the individuum for certain tasks (Grunnow et al., 2018).

Bolzendahl and Myers (2004) have argued that attitudes towards gender ideology can be explained through the concept of interest-based or exposure-based explanations (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004). One is more likely to have egalitarian attitudes towards gender equality, if one assumes that achieving gender equality is in their individual best interest (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004). This is more often the case for women than it is for men, leading to women being generally more egalitarian that men (Davis & Greenstein, 2009). Exposure-based explanations on the other hand assume, that with more exposure to more egalitarian or traditional beliefs through situations and ideas, one might become more egalitarian/traditional (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004).

Gender ideology is influenced by a variety of aspects, this can include but is not limited to, religious beliefs, social class, education, employment, income, age, and marital status (Davis & Greenstein, 2009; Dietrich, 2013). Traditional gender ideology is for example associated with a higher income (Dietrich, 2013). Research has made it clear that gender ideology is affecting and influencing family processes, as well as other aspects of people's lives (Davis & Greenstein, 2009). The inclusion of gender ideology within research is therefore important, especially when it comes to gendered phenomena (Davis & Greenstein, 2009).

The items and frameworks used to measure gender ideology in surveys, both longitudinal and cross-sectional, are often unidimensional (Davis & Greenstein, 2009). Gender ideology is therefore often measured using items covering the following aspects: "primacy of the breadwinner role, belief in gendered separate spheres, working women and relationship quality, motherhood and the feminine self, household utility, and acceptance of male privilege." (Davis & Greenstein, 2009, p.89). While the one-dimensionality of this approach is highly debated, given the inclusion of a Gender Equality Scale in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP refugee survey, that

is based on similar items as described above, this study will be using a unidimensional understanding of gender ideology.

## 2.2. Integration

It is important to consider the debate and ambiguity surrounding the term integration (Rytter, 2019). It is especially important to mindful of this discourse when it comes to highly politicised situations, like the so-called "refugee crisis" and the following debates regarding the integration of the refugees. Depending on the context the term integration can describe a variety of social processes, but also be a reflection of existing power structures (Rytter, 2019). An uncritically use, within policies or research, risks to reinforce the power hierarchies between majorities and minorities (Rytter, 2019). In any case integration must be viewed within specific social, cultural, and political contexts (Rytter, 2019). Integration could, depending on the context, refer to the integration into social spheres, like communities, into the economic sector or into a culture (Rytter, 2019). This study will focus on a specific aspect of integration into communities. Integration can additionally be a very ambiguous term, describing both the "final result" and the process of getting there (Rytter, 2019).

Using Denmark as the example Rytter (2019) identifies three aspects of the concept of integration, that highlight how power relations, racialised othering, and marginalization are reproduced. Integration in Denmark – and in many other European countries – producing the idea of a homogenous nation state and/or society, into which immigrants and refugees must be integrated (Rytter, 2019). This concept of integration is often highly racialized (Rytter, 2019). While immigrants from western nations, such as the US or other European countries, and their cultural values and norms are usually not part of the public debate surrounding integration, other immigrant-groups, such as immigrants from Muslim-majority countries are often at the centre of those debates (Rytter, 2019). The created imaginary of the nation state is here threatened by the imagined other. The immigrant, in most debates the non-European other, is framed as threatening the existence of the majority populations culture, the welfare state, etc. (Rytter, 2019). The "refugee crisis" and the following rise of populist and nationalist narratives, which heavily rely on the othering of Muslim refugees and their perceived gender ideology allegedly threatening the gender equality "inherent" to German society, is a good example. Within this narrative, gender ideology is constructed as the main hindrance to integration.

Yuval-Davis (2006) describes this production of the imagined nation and its boundaries as "Politics of Belonging". While those boundaries are imagined, they have an impact on real life,

as they define who belongs to the imagined community and who does not (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Depending on the political, social, and historical context, certain social locations (e.g., "race"[2], origin, place of birth), identities (e.g., based on culture, religion, etc.) as well as political and ethical values, can become an essential requirement to belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Requirements based on social locations are generally the most racialized and most difficult to fulfil, others such as language, culture and values often lead to processes of assimilation (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

Across different western nations there is an ongoing debate regarding the use of the concepts of integration and assimilation (Schneider & Crul, 2010). The latter is mainly represented in the US-debate and focuses on the process of immigrants and the host culture becoming more and more similar (Schneider & Crul, 2010). This is usually measured by the level of economic and social success within the "American" way of living (Schneider & Crul, 2010). The European debate on the other hand is mostly dominated by the concept of integration (Schneider & Crul, 2010). Here language and a certain level of cultural homogeneity are central (Schneider & Crul, 2010). Another big difference between both debates is their stance on "ethnic enclaves" or "parallel societies". While within the US-concept of assimilation, economic success within a parallel society is considered positive, the European discourse views "parallel societies" as the opposite of successful integration (Schneider & Crul, 2010). On the other hand, there is a lot of effort put into the structural incorporation of immigrants into society and the overcoming of inequalities (Schneider & Crul, 2010).

### 2.2.1. Markers of Integration

Integration, nevertheless, remains a relevant concept that is widely used in politics and academia, especially in relation to refugees, which makes it an appropriate choice for research in the field of migration (Ager & Strang, 2008).

Ager and Strang (2008) present a conceptual framework in which they identify ten core domains of integration, as depicted in Figure 1 below. This framework will function as the conceptual framework for this study, it is especially valuable as it allows for a holistic perspective on integration. The inclusion of all the domains mentioned in the framework in the analysis would be ideal in order to get a detailed picture of the integration outcomes. However, this is too large of a task for the scope of this study.

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[2] The term "race" will only be used within parenthesis in this study, to draw attention to its problematic, oppressive and often violent use and definitions throughout history.
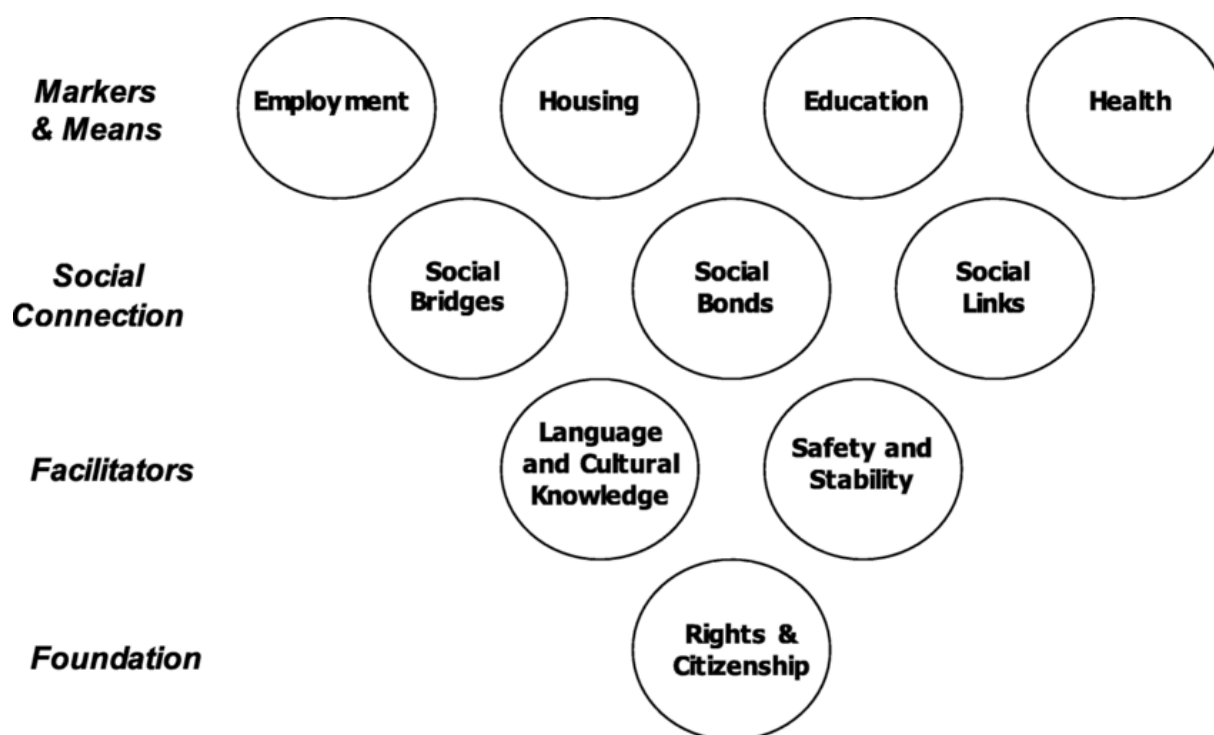
*Figure 1 Framework of Integration (Ager & Strang, 2008)*

The first section "Markers and Means", includes several domains, that are generally seen to be markers for successful integration (Ager & Strang, 2008). But having stable employment and housing, as well as access to education and health services is also a means in order to achieve integration (Ager & Strang, 2008). Education is here seen specifically in relation to school education (Ager & Strang, 2008). The category of "Social Connections" will be a central part of the study. The domains Social Bridges, Social Bonds and Social Links refer to the relationship of refugees with the mainstream society of the host country, with co-ethnic or co-national groups and finally with the structures of the state respectively (Ager & Strang, 2008). The "Facilitators" of integration are language and cultural knowledge as well as safety and stability (Ager & Strang, 2008). The latter includes the feeling of personal safety from both physical and verbal attacks and the existence of a stable community (Ager & Strang, 2008). The last section identified by Ager is the "Foundation" of integration, which is defined as rights and citizenship (Ager & Strang, 2008).

## 2.3. Belonging

When it comes to measuring the success of integration, statistics on the different aspects of the integration progress – as described above – are often utilized (Rytter, 2019). High participation in the labour market or high success rates of immigrants in the education system, in relation to the majority population, are therefore seen as indicators for successful integration (Rytter, 2019). The higher the education or the "better" the job, the more integrated into the majority society (Rytter, 2019). While statistics like these do cover important aspects of integration, they often fail to address the complex reality of the integration process. For example, studies in Denmark have shown, that immigrant women achieve higher grades in some university subjects than the national average (Rytter, 2019). Rytter (2019) suggests, that this would theoretically not only mean that these immigrant women are successfully integrated into Danish majority society, but that they are somehow even better integrated than their Danish peers. It becomes clear that to measure successful integration of immigrants into majority societies a more holistic approach is needed.

Belonging is a fundamental, biological need (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). It is describing, the feeling of being "home" and safe (Yuval-Davis, 2006) and can also be seen as an important indicator for successful social integration (Fuchs et al., 2021b). The violent disruptions to the lives of refugees caused by forced migration, make the rebuilding of this sense of belonging especially crucial for refugees (Fuchs et al., 2021b). It is often minority groups, such as racial minorities or individuals with disabilities, that struggle with the feeling of belonging (Allen et al. 2021). While belonging is a subjective feeling, it is greatly influenced by a person's social, cultural, and environmental surroundings (Allen et al., 2021). Having a sense of belonging is not only a measurement for the successful integration of immigrants and refugees into a new social and cultural environment, but also closely related to good mental and physical health (Allen et al., 2021; Fuchs et al, 2021b). The concept of belonging has been used in a variety of different research fields, but there is no consensus on definition, framework, or measurement (Allen et al., 2021).

The framework, depicted in Figure 2, developed by Allen et al. (2021), is meant to conceptualise belonging in a dynamic way. It is made up of four components, Competencies, Opportunities, Motivations, and Perceptions, which interact with each other and the social, cultural, and environmental surroundings of individuals, describing the dynamic experience of belonging (Allen et al., 2021). Opportunities describes: "[…] the availability of groups, people, places, times, and spaces that enable belonging to occur." (Allen et al., 2021, p.92). Motivation is concerned with the individual reasons for people to strive for belonging (Allen et al., 2021). This can for example be negatively influenced by negative experiences or previous traumatic experiences (Allen et al., 2021). Perceptions of belonging is defined as a person's subjective experience regarding process of connecting (Allen et al., 2021).
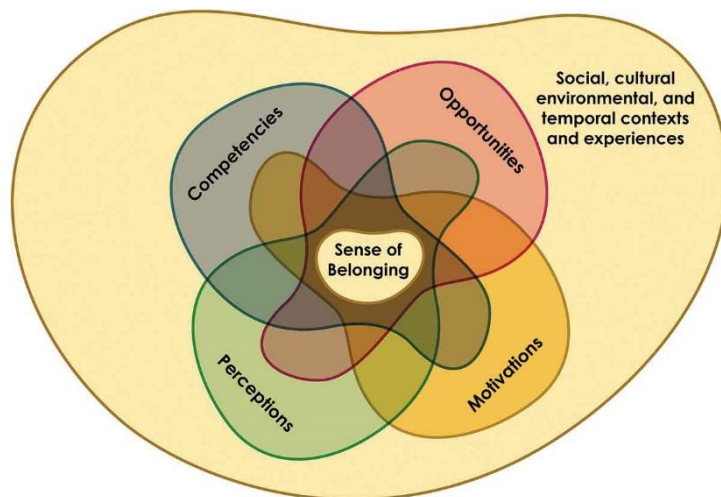


*Figure 2 Integrative Framework of Belonging (Allen et al., 2021)*

Especially important for this study is the last component regarding competencies of belonging (Allen et al., 2021). This component is concerned with the social and cultural skills of individuals, that allow them to connect with people, the place, and the culture (Allen et al., 2021). Cultural skills include the ability to adjust to and accept cultural and ethical values of the surrounding society (Allen et al., 2021). For refugees coming to Germany this would, in the context of this study, include the ability to accept German egalitarian values of gender equality.

The scale used in this study to assess refugees' sense of belonging as an indicator for successful social integration is the "Challenged Sense of Belonging Scale" (CSBS). The CSBS was developed to measure moments, where refugees sense of belonging is being challenged in a specific context (Fuchs et al., 2021b). The scale includes items concerning the following topics: Identification, Participation, Congruence and Connectedness, which align with the framework described above (Fuchs et al., 2021b).

# 3. Literature Review

## 3.1 Gender in Migration

Gender is in many ways a significant aspect of migration. On the one hand migration has historically been seen as a largely male phenomenon, with women only playing a passive part (Lutz, 2010). With men often being portrayed as migrating `voluntarily´ and women sees as simply following their husbands or other male family members, policies have been adapted to the needs of men (Lutz, 2010). In 2018, 45% of refugees were women, but when it comes to integration –regarding both reports and policy strategies – there is little data available (Liebig, 2018). Lutz (2010) advocates in her article "Gender in the Migratory Process" for a gendered approach to the analysis of migratory processes. She evaluates on the importance of considering gender, masculinity and femineity when looking at migratory flows and understanding the specific positions and needs of women as well as men (Lutz, 2010). A 2021 study regarding the challenges for refugee women in Europe states: "A holistic approach to addressing refugee women´s needs is a priority" (Davaki, 2021, p.8), as prevailing power structures place them in an especially vulnerable position. Factors ranging from poorer health, lower average education, cultural aspects, and gender roles set them apart from their male counterparts and often lead to worse integration outcomes, specifically when it comes to the labour market (Liebig, 2018).

Although focusing on specific challenges faced by women during the integration process is an important part of a gendered approach to integration, including a male perspective is equally important (Lutz, 2010). But within gendered approaches to migration and integration, gender-sensitive is often understood as equivalent to a sole focus on female perspectives (Nombasa, 2011). Men, just like women, face challenges and discrimination specific to their gender during the integration-process, constantly facing stereotypes and norms around their masculinity (Lutz, 2010). While there are some studies focused on the integration of male refugees, they often do not take a gendered perspective when analysing potential challenges. A 2017 study looked at the effectiveness of a soccer project, when it comes to the integration of young male refugees (Lange et al., 2017). Even though the study focused specifically on the integration of male refugees into Germany, the distinctive position and challenges of male refugees integrating into European countries were not mentioned (Lange et al., 2017). Within a patriarchal system migrant men face racism, oppression, exploitation, and often dangerous working conditions, while simultaneously having to fulfil the norm of being a man (Lutz, 2010). In recent years the

call for in-depth analysis of masculinities within the integration process, in addition to the focus on women's circumstances, has grown (Kronsell, 2016).

### 3.1.1. Gender Ideology in German Society

There has been research regarding the most prevalent gender ideology among people in Germany. Grunow, Begall and Buchler (2018) conducted a study in some European countries, including Germany, to assess the most widespread gender ideology. It should be said, that this study was part of the development of a more multidimensional framework of gender ideology, than the one used in this study, as described in section 2.1.. In line with the observation made by Davis and Greenstein (2009), that society as a whole has become much more egalitarian, they did not expect to find traditional gender beliefs being the most prevalent in any of the countries included (Grunnow, et.al., 2018). While this assumption was supported, the highest incidence of traditional beliefs in the study, was found among men in western Germany (12 %) (Grunnow et al., 2018). Overall egalitarian ideologies were widespread among the population in western Germany (52% of women and 41% of men) (Grunnow et al., 2018).

Studies regarding the gender ideology held by refugee men compared to the ones held by the German population, have been inconclusive. While some find that there is a significant difference (e.g., Brücker et al., 2016a), others did not find any significant differences (e.g. Brücker et al., 2016b). The former found traditional ideologies to be more represented among the participants (Brücker et al., 2016a). Support for the theoretical idea of gender equality could be found, but the concept of the brother/father/husband as the protector and provider of girls and women was nevertheless widespread (Brücker et al., 2016a). Discussions regarding the presumed value differences between the German mainstream society and the refugee population, are often based on misconceptions (Fuchs et al., 2021a). This includes the assumption, that the support for values – including gender ideology – is homogenous within one population, which could lead to the assumption that Germans inherently hold egalitarian gender ideologies (Fuchs et al., 2021a). There are studies looking into the value differences between host society, specifically western societies, and immigrants, often from non-western countries (Fuchs et al., 2021a). Similar to the research previously mentioned, these studies did not find consensus on whether significant differences in values between immigrants and specifically western host societies, exists or not (Fuchs et al., 2021a). However, there is some evidence from comparative studies that the support for liberal democratic and gender equality values is different between immigrants -from mostly Muslim and less industrialized countries- and the majority population in western, industrialized nations (Fuchs et al., 2021a). It is

however important to note that there is little evidence that the values present in immigrants home countries align with the values held by the individual refugee (Fuchs et al., 2021a).

This potential discrepancy in values could be explained, by "acculturation" –adapting to one's cultural surroundings – or by the fact, that immigrants might choose the country they immigrate to, based on the alignment of values (Fuchs et al., 2021a). Since this study is focusing specifically on refugees, the last point is most likely not applicable. When it comes to research on value differences between host society and the refugee population, the empirical evidence is even slimer and unanimous conclusions cannot be made (Fuchs et al., 2021a). While some find evidence for significant differences, others suggest there might only be marginal differences in values (Fuchs et al., 2021a). A new study finds no significant difference between value differences of refugees and the German population (Fuchs et al., 2021a). These results are however greatly influenced by socio-economic factors, such as age, gender and most importantly country of origin (Fuchs et al., 2021a). Religiosity is the one aspect, where refugees were found to hold more traditional values, than the host-societies (Fuchs et al., 2021a).

### 3.1.2. Gender Ideology and Religion

One´s gender ideology is not only influenced by the specific social background of each individual, but the impact of social and cultural norms should not be underestimated (Diel et al., 2009). Especially religious norms have long been thought to uphold and reinforce traditional gender ideology and gender inequalities (Diel et al., 2009). Just as greater religiosity and more traditional gender ideology were found to be correlated, societal modernization and secularism are assumed to lead to a more egalitarian gender ideology (Diel et al., 2009). Within this context it is assumed that immigrants and refugees from Muslim majority and "less industrialized,, countries hold a more traditional gender ideology, than the average "modern" European citizen (Ng, 2022). There is however a distinct lack of empirical evidence, that would prove this assumption (Fuchs et al., 2021a).

Religion, particularly Islam, is a central part of the public debate on values, refugees, integration and cultural belonging in Europe (Ng, 2022). In recent years, after the so-called "refugee crisis" and New Year's Eve events 2015/16 in Cologne, the idea of the "oppressive Muslim men" was spread more and more (Hess et al., 2016). This narrative is no longer only part of right-wing circles, but a study by Wigger, Yendell and Herbert (2022) found that through reporting of mainstream media outlets, migrant men, who are often assumed to be Muslim, are more widely

associated with various negative stereotypes. This holds the potential to increase intersectional discrimination and oppression (Wigger et al., 2022).

The narrative of Islam as the main obstacle, preventing Muslim immigrants and refugees from integrating into European societies, is widespread (Ng, 2022). The social belonging of Islam and Muslims to Germany and German culture has been part of public and political debates for some time and was only amplified in the aftermath of the "refugee crisis". The empirical evidence is inconclusive in regard to the influence of religious norms, specifically in Islam, on gender ideology and the integration of immigrants into European societies. While there are some studies that that found religion hindering the inclusion of women into the labour market (Kalmijn & Kraaykamp, 2018; Röder, 2014),  Diehl et al. (2019) found that religious values only play a small role in the establishment of traditional gender ideology among Turkish immigrants in Germany (Another study found that the level of religiosity in general did not have any impact on women´s participation in the labour market, but Muslim women´s religiosity specifically did negatively impact participation in the labour market (Kanas & Müller, 2021). There is however a lack of research regarding the separate influences of cultural values and religious values on gender ideology (Ng, 2022).

"Blocked acculturation" suggests that a minority group, such as Muslim immigrants, tend to hold onto the traditional values of their home country, when confronted with discrimination, islamophobia, and racism from the majority population in the host country (Ng, 2022).  Within research regarding the traditionalism of Muslim immigrants in the west this would suggest that both first- and second-generation Muslim immigrants, have gender ideologies more closely related to their origin-countries culture, than the host countries (Ng, 2022). But a study found the opposite to be true: Muslim immigrants were more influenced by the host societies gender ideology, than their non-Muslim counterparts (Ng, 2022). Suggesting that the often assumed clear separation between Muslim immigrants and majority population European host countries is not necessarily that distinctive (Ng, 2022). Ng (2022) also mentions, that precisely because of the social discrimination they face, the need to adapt to the mainstream societies gender ideology might be greater for Muslim immigrants than for non-Muslim immigrants.

## 3.2. Gender Ideology and Social Belonging

### 3.2.1. Values, Community and Migration

The importance of shared values for integration has been recognised by many researchers (e.g., Ager & Strang, 2008; Allen et al., 2021). While the diversity of values held by people within societies is often underestimated, there is consensus that significant difference in values and belief could cause a disruption of the social order (Fuchs et al., 2021a). Within this ongoing debate on belonging or not belonging of Muslim refugees, the differences referred to are not as obvious, as for example language (Fuchs et al., 2021a). Instead, value differences regarding democratic values, secularism and finally gender equality are central to the discussion of belonging (Fuchs et al., 2021a).

Shared values are one the one hand central to communities and collectives, but on the other hand they are also subjective to each individual (Fuchs et al., 2021a). This assumption supports the idea that refugees and immigrants often "bring" their culture with them (Fuchs et al., 2021a). While migration can lead to a diversification of values and morals within a community, this heterogeneity of values might lead to growing conflicts (Fuchs et al., 2021a). Studies have confirmed a significant difference in values regarding democracy, secularism and gender equality between Muslim-Majority countries and western nations (Fuchs et al., 2021a). The bigger the value differences between individuals and groups, the less stable the community is assumed to be (Fuchs et al., 2021a). This would also suggest that the process of developing a sense of social belonging as a refugee, is easier and more seamless the closer the shared values of the refugee population and the majority population of the host country are to each other (Fuchs et al., 2021a). The discussion on whether or not Islam, and more specifically Muslim refugees, belong to German society is based on the assumption made by populist groups, that Muslim gender relations are patriarchal and oppressive (Fuchs et al., 2021a), while gender equality is an essential part of German culture (Hess et al., 2016). Muslim refugees can therefore never belong to German society and any attempt of integration would ultimately lead to conflict. While there is little research on the effect of gender ideology on immigrants' sense of belonging, studies on the inclusion of immigrant women into the European labour market have shown, that due to their gender ideology Muslim women are less integrated into the labour market (Kanas & Müller, 2021).

Suggestions have been made to use shared values and culture to facilitate community building, integration and more importantly support immigrants in developing a sense of belonging.

Sharing the same values, culture, and history, for example in form of food or religious events, allows refugees and immigrants in general to create a safe space that is out of reach from experiences of exclusion and discrimination (Boccagni & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2021). A powerful connecter, that can invoke feelings of "home" and community is religion (Boccagni & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2021). Especially for the refugee women, who have grounded their lives and identity in their faith, could use religion as a way of connecting and building a community (Davaki, 2021). It is exactly that sense of connectedness that is the foundation of belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Rebuilding a sense of belonging can not only be seen as important for each refugee´s mental well-being but can also be seen as an important indicator for successful social integration (Allen et al., 2021, Fuchs et al., 2021b).

### 3.2.2. Labour Market

The influence of gender ideology on labour market participation has been studied, finding that men with more traditional gender role values generally participate more in the labour market, while it is the opposite for women (Al-Mantila & Fleischmann, 2018). Especially women from countries with more traditional gender ideology face immense challenges when integrating into the European labour market (OECD, 2018).

Many studies have been conducted to research the influence of those factors on women's integration. Especially the integration of female refugees into the labour market has been of interest. Historically, women migrants have not been seen as part of the labour market, as they were mostly employed in the private sector (Lutz, 2010), leading to integration structures and programmes designed to fit men's needs. Studies have shown that the participation of female refugees in the labour market is less than that of their male counterparts due to variety of factors (Salikutluk & Menke, 2021). Some other key challenges to integration identified by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are low education, lack of language skills, family obligations, lack of networks, and overall, less integration support (Liebig, 2018). Studies on female refugees' participation in the labour market, have found that similar factors to be an important influence (Salikutluk & Menke, 2021). Women often arrive to the host country as a family or within the context of either family reunification (Liebig, 2018), making family responsibilities and dynamics a central part of the integration process. They also receive less integration support overall, specifically regarding employment, and have less contact with the population of the host country and other migrant groups than their male counterparts (Liebig, 2018).

### 3.2.3. Society

While there have been many publications concerned with integration into the labour-market, with and without gendered perspectives (e.g., Kosyakova & Sirries, 2017), when it comes to the social dimension of integration Hartmann and Steinmann (2020) have identified a gap in research. The influence of gender ideology on social integration has barely been studied (Hartmann & Steinmann, 2020). The same goes for the influence of gender ideology on refugees' sense of belonging. In their study Hartmann and Steinmann (2020) examine the connection of gender-values and women´s social integration within Germany using data from the 2016 IAB-BAMF-SOEP refugee survey (They build on inconclusive findings and theory regarding the importance of gender roles and values in the process of social belonging and touch upon several research gaps they identified regarding this relationship (Hartmann & Steinmann, 2020). Throughout their study they put emphasize on the influence that the partners' gender role values have on the social contact of refugee women (Hartmann & Steinmann, 2020). The study is contributing to the research gap, that is social contact and gender ideology, while simultaneously focusing on the complexities of and various influences on social contact among refugees (Hartmann & Steinmann, 2020). Their findings suggest that both women's and their partners' gender role values influence the social contact of the women (Hartmann & Steinmann, 2020). Especially the contact of refugees with the German population decreased with more traditional gender role values (Hartmann & Steinmann, 2020).

Social contact, both as in having the opportunity and the social abilities for it, are two main components of the framework of belonging, developed by Allen et al. (2021) (refer to section 2.3.). Hartmann and Steinmann (2020) looked specifically at the opportunity of social contact for refugee women and found that gender ideology is indeed impacted by their and their partners gender ideology. This would suggest that there is also an association between gender ideology and sense of belonging.

# 4. Significance, Research Gaps and Research Questions

## 4.1 Significance and Research Gaps

The influence of gender ideologies held by refugees on integration has not been extensively researched, despite being at the centre of public and political discussions regarding the "belonging" of refugees. While there has been research on the association between gender ideology and the integration of refugees into the labour market (e.g., Al-Mantila & Fleischmann, 2018) and on social contact of refugee women (Hartmann & Steinmann, 2020), most studies are focused on a more generalized understanding of successful integration.

This study will be using the concept of "belonging", based on a newly developed scale, to focus on the subjective and intimate experience of refugees, rather than a more traditional understanding of integration (refer to section 2.2.). Focusing on individual value differences among refugees and their effect on a sense of belonging, instead of nation-level differences, which enables this study to capture and analyse the intimate experience of refugees (Fuchs et al., 2021a).

This study will secondly contribute to this field of research by including a male perspective. The study by Hartmann and Steinmann (2020) focused solely on women and only included men as potential influences on women's social contact. By including men and assessing whether there is a difference in the effect of gender ideology of male or female refugees on social integration, this perspective will be extended. This inclusion of men is especially important here, as populist narratives are often based on the idea of the "oppressive Muslim men" (Hess et al., 2016).

Multiple aspects within the field of migration will be covered in this study. Firstly, the influence of gender ideology on the social integration process of refugees. Secondly the assessment of successful integration using the subjective concept of belonging, and finally the inclusion of men. There is also the potential to critically examine the way in which the discourse surrounding refugees is reproducing racist and Islamophobic narratives under the guise of protecting German values and culture. From a political perspective, the discourse surrounding integration is still and will be relevant for the time to come.

## 4.2. Research Questions

1. To what extent is there a relationship between gender ideology and belonging among refugees in Germany?

    1.1 Do refugees have traditional gender ideology?

    1.2 To what extent is there a relationship between gender ideology and belonging when including other social integration factors like, religion, age, residence status, marital status etc., in the model?

2. Is there a difference between the way gender ideology of male and female refugees are influencing social integration?

# 5. Methods

This study´s research design is based on a specific set of assumptions about the nature of reality (ontology) and how reality is observed and discovered by researchers (Neuman, 2014). Throughout the study the critical social science (CSS) approach to research will be used. CSS defines the way empirical reality is observed and experiences as highly influenced by subjective beliefs and values (Neuman, 2014). While an objective truth does exist, the researchers cannot capture its entirety, as all knowledge of empirical reality is influenced by subjective beliefs (Neuman, 2014). CSS is always transformative, aiming to shift people's perspectives of reality and finally improve living conditions (Neuman, 2014).

## 5.1. The Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP)

The German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP), located at the German Institute for Economic Research in Berlin (DIW),  has been running surveys and researching randomly sampled German households since 1984 (Goebel et al., 2019). A variety of self-reported variables, allows the SOEP to provide researchers with longitudinal data on a broad set of research areas, including, but not limited to, inequalities and mobility, psychological outcomes and attitudes, and lastly migration (Goebel et al., 2019). The SOEP "is a comprehensive multi-dimensional database to understanding human behaviour and decision making […]" (Goebel et al., 2019, p.346), that has been used in international studies, such as OECD reports and is integral to government reports in Germany (Goebel et al., 2019). The database additionally allows researchers to conduct cross-sectional research on 96,461 individuals and 42,263 households (Jacobsen et al., 2021). Within the SOEP-dataset each survey year is equivalent to one data wave (Jacobsen et al., 2021).

### 5.1.1 The IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey for Refugees

While the target population for the SOEP has been mainly been German residents, several additional samples have been added over the past 38 years (Goebel et al., 2019). This includes the sub-samples covering immigration and refugees in recent years (Samples D, M1-5) (Jacobsen et al., 2021). Aspects of migration and integration, have been part of the SOEP from the beginning, by adding specialised samples, the focus on immigrants and refugees been extended significantly over time (Jacobsen et al., 2021). The first  refugee-specific sample was conducted in 2016 (Sample M3-5) (Jacobsen et al., 2021). The IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Surveys for refugees (Sample M3-5), were conducted in collaboration with the Research Centre of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF-FZ), the Institute for Employment Research

(IAB) of the Federal Employment Agency (BA), and the SOEP (BAMF, 2022). The survey covers, sometimes varying, topics ranging from the refugee´s route to Germany, subjective well-being, integration to labour market access and value orientations (Jacobsen et al., 2021).

## 5.1.2 Data Collection Method, Survey Instruments and Participants

Ausländerbehörden und BAMF-Außenstellen
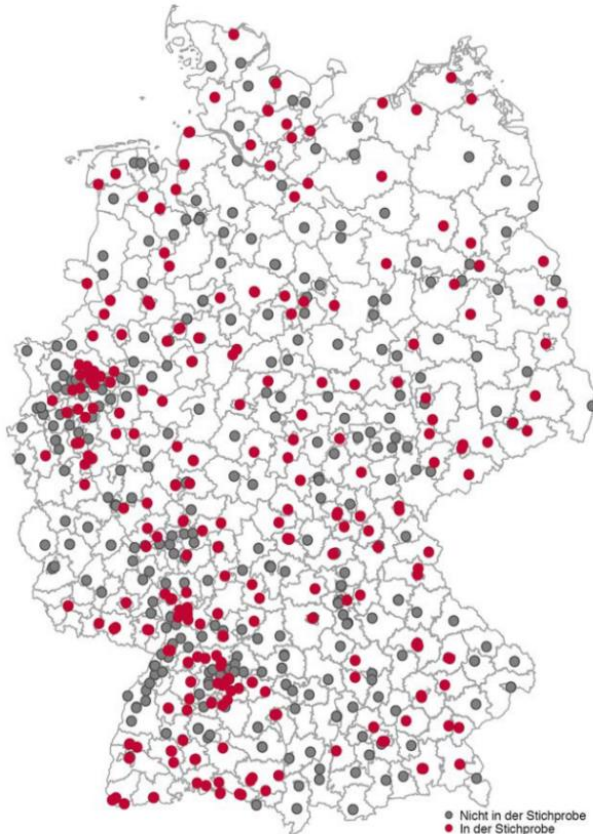


Anmerkung: Zum Ziehungszeitpunkt existierende und in der Stichprobe berücksichtigte Ausländerbehörden und BAMF-Außenstellen.

*Figure 3 Map of Survey-Sites (Kroh et al., 2016)*

The IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Surveys for refugees was conducted through Face-to-Face interviews by 100 professionally educated interviewers from the institute KANTAR Public (Kroh et al., 2016).  The interviews were conducted in 169 randomly chosen areas or "Sample Points" (Kroh et al., 2016).  The locations of over 250 government agencies, where the interviews took place are indicated in red in Figure 3 (Kroh et al., 2016).

The  survey instruments used in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Surveys for refugees are questionnaires used on three different levels: individual, household and interviewer level (Kroh et al., 2016). Both the SOEP samples of the German population and the specialised IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey for refugees include some of the same survey instruments to allow for easier

comparative analysis (Jacobsen et al., 2021). When it comes to the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey for refugees, all questionnaires were translated into the seven most commonly spoken languages spoken by the target population, which are Arabic, Kurmanji, Farsi, Urdu, Pashto, German and English (Kroh et al., 2016). Both computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) and (audio) computer-assisted self-interview ((A)CASI), the latter to support participants with low reading skills, were used to conduct the interviews (Fuchs et al., 2021b). In some cases family members or translators were also part of the data collection process (Kroh et al., 2016).

The participants are asylum seekers and refugees who applied for asylum in Germany between 2013 and 2019 and were selected randomly form the Central Register of Foreigners (AZR) (Goebel et al., 2019). all refugees and asylum seekers, disregarding their residency status, who entered the country within the above defined time frame were eligible (Kroh et al., 2016). In addition to the randomly chosen individual, all close family members living in the same household were also interviewed (Kroh et al., 2016). The IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey for refugees was constructed as a yearly repeated survey, a disproportionately high amount of people, who received a positive asylum application, were chosen (Kroh et al., 2016). To account for the fact, that around three quarters of all refugees are men and around 58% are under 30 years old, the number of participants, who are women and people over 30 were disproportionately high (Kroh et al., 2016). Since 2016 8,153 people have been surveyed at least once and 5,382 participants more than once (BAMF, 2022).

## 5.2. Study Sample

The sample for the present study was limited to participants from the following surveys: "SOEP-Core – 2017: Individual and Biography (M3-M5, Initial Interview, with Reference to Variables)" (SOEP Group, 2019) and "SOEP-Core – 2018: Person und Biografie (M3-M5, Wiederbefragte, mit Verweis auf Variablen)" (SOEP Group, 2020). Only Participants, who were part of both the second (2017) and third (2018) wave of the study were included, since only the second wave included the scale measuring Gender Equality and only the third wave included the CSBS. Additionally, some versions of the second wave questionnaire did not include the questions on gender equality. Only participants, who were interviewed with versions of the questionnaire, that included the relevant items for the Gender Equality scale, were incorporated in this study. Both men and women were included.

## 5.3 Variables

### 5.3.1 Dependent Variables

The variable "**Challenged Sense of Belonging**" (**CSBS**), which is measuring "Sense of Belonging", was developed for, and first tested in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey for refugees (Fuchs et al., 2021b). The authors based the scale on already existing scales measuring belonging, as well as theoretical research on the topic (Fuchs et al., 2021b). The CSBS is focusing on the following four main aspects of belonging: participation, connectedness, identification, and congruence (Fuchs et al., 2021b). The items are all negatively worded and are used to identify moments, where a sense of social belonging is challenged or non-existent (Fuchs et al., 2021b).

The variable was measured using the following items:

(1) I am troubled by feeling I have no place in this world.
(2) I don´t feel that I participate with anyone or any group.
(3) I feel torn between worlds.
(4) I feel disconnected from those around me.

All items are ranked on a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 1, "strongly agree", to 5, "strongly disagree" (Fuchs et al., 2021b). Higher scores indicate a less challenged sense of belonging. The scale was previously tested for reliability showing good internal consistency estimates (Cronbach´s alpha of 0.82) (Fuchs et al., 2021b). The study computed all four variables into the variable CSBS, ranging from 1 to 5.

### 5.3.2 Independent Variables

The variable "**Gender Equality**" is measuring "Gender Ideology" and was adapted from the World Value Survey and the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) and modified for the purpose of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey for refugees (Jacobsen et al., 2017). This variable is measured using the following items:

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

(1) Having a job is the best way for a woman to be independent
(2) Even a married woman should have a paid job so that she can be financially independent.
(3) If a woman earns more money than her partner, this inevitably leads to problems.

(4) For parents, vocational training or higher education for their sons should be more important than vocational training or higher education for their daughters.

(5) At home, the husband should have the final say.

All items are measured on a scale from 1 (I totally disagree) to 7 (I totally agree) (Jacobsen et al., 2017). The scale was previously tested for reliability showing good internal consistency estimates (Cronbach´s alpha of 0.54) (Jacobsen et al., 2017). The items (3), (4) and (5) were reverse coded. Higher scores for all items now indicate a more egalitarian ideology towards gender equality. The study computed all five variables into the variable Gender Equality, ranging from 1 to 7.

### 5.3.3 Control Variables

**Age/Sex**

Both variables were measured through a question asking the participants to confirm their personal information. Age is measured by year of birth, while sex was recorded as either male (1) or female (2).[3] The age variable was recoded into the age at the time of the follow-up interview in 2018. Participants were between 19 and 93 years old.

**Religious Affiliation**

This variable was measured by the question: Do you belong to a church, religious community or faith?. The participants answered the question using the following possibilities:

(1) Yes, Catholic
(2) Yes, Protestant
(3) Yes, Member of another Christian denomination or religious community
(4) Yes, Islamic Denomination
(5) Yes, Other Denomination
(6) No Denomination
(7) Yes, Christian Religious Community

The item was collapsed into the following categories: (1) Islamic Denomination, (2) Other Denomination, (3) No denomination, (4) Christian Religious Community.

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[3] The researcher acknowledges, that the use of binary gender/sex measures, as well as not making a distinction between gender and sex is problematic and potentially exclusionary. Refer to section 7.3.2..

**Residence Status**

Residence status was measured by the question: "Which residence permit do you currently have? Please look at the label of the immigration office in your passport." The participants answered the question using the following options:

(1) Temporary Resident Permit

(2) Residence Permission (Asylum)

(3) Residence permit under Sect. 25, para. 2, alternative 1 of the German Residence Act (recognised refugee according to the Geneva Convention)

(4) Residence permit under Sect. 25, para. 2, alternative 2 of the German Residence Act (subsidiary protection)

(5) Temporary Suspension of Deportation

(6) Residence permit under Sects 22, 23, 23a, 25 para. 3, 4 or 5 of the German Residence Act (miscellaneous humanitarian residence)

(7) Residence permit under Sects 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36 of the German Residence Act (family reunification

(8) Settlement Permission

(9) Application for new residence permit, including extension of your old permit (particularly a probationary certificate)

(10)     Another residence title

(11)     No residence permit

This item was collapsed into the following groups: (1) Temporary Residence (2) Residence Permit and (3) No Residence Permit.


**Marital Status:**

This variable was measured by the question: What is your marital status?. The participants answered the question using the following possibilities:

(1) Single, I've never been married

(2) Married

(3) Registered partnership

(4) Divorced

(5) Terminated registered partnership

(6) Widowed

(7) Partner from registered partnership is deceased

This item was collapsed into the following groups: (1) Single (2) Married/Partnership (3) Divorced/Terminated Partnership and (4) Partner deceased.

**German Skills**

This variable was measured using the following items, ranked on a scale from 1 (Very well), 2 (Well),3 (Averagely), 4 (Not very well), to 5 (Not at all) (Jacobsen, 2017).

(1) How well can you speak German?
(2) How well can you write in German?
(3) How well can you read in German?

The scale was previously tested for reliability showing good internal consistency estimates (Cronbach´s alpha of 0.93) (Jacobsen et al., 2017). All three items were used to compute the variable German Skills, ranging from 1 to 5.

**Employment Status**

This variable was measured by the question: Are you currently working?. The participants answered the question using the following possibilities:

(1) Yes, in full-time employment
(2) Yes, in part-time employment
(3) Yes, vocational Training
(4) Yes, marginal employment
(5) Near Retirement, Zero Working Hours
(6) Voluntary Military Service
(7) Voluntary Social/Ecological Year, federal volunteer service
(8) Workshop for disabled persons
(9) Not employed
(10) Yes, doing an internship

This item was collapsed into the following groups: (1) Full-/Part-Time Employed (2) other work and (3) Not employed.

**Contact to Germans**

This variable is measuring contact with German people, that is longer than simple greetings. It was measured using the following items:

(1) How often do you have contact to Germans in your circle of friends?
(2) How often do you have contact to Germans in your neighbourhood?
(3) How often do you have contact with German people at your workplace (or at school, university)?

The variable is ranked on a scale from (1) Every day; (2) several times per week; (3) Every week; (4) Every Month, (5) Less often; to (6) Never.

**Time spent with Germans:**

This variable was measured with the following question: How often do you spend time with German people? The item is ranked on a scale from (1) Every day; (2) several times per week; (3) Every week; (4) Every Month, (5) Less often; to (6) Never.

**Time spent with people from origin country:**

This variable was measured with the following question: How often do you spend time with people from your country of origin who are not related to you? Participants answered on a scale from (1) Every day; (2) several times per week; (3) Every week; (4) Every Month, (5) Less often; to (6) Never.

**Time spent with people from other countries:**

This variable was measured with the following question: How often do you spend time with people from other countries? Participants answered on a scale from (1) Every day; (2) several times per week; (3) Every week; (4) Every Month, (5) Less often; to (6) Never.

## 5.4 Data Analysis

The study used Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 to analyse the impact of gender ideology on the sense of belonging among refugees in Germany and the influence of a variety of social, cultural, and environmental factors, as described above. The variables were created as described above. Missing cases were excluded pairwise. The analysis was conducted in the following three steps:

(1) Descriptive analyses were conducted for all variables. Additionally internal consistency was assessed for both main variables using Cronbach's alpha (Pallant, p.6 2020). Refer section 5.5.1 for more details on reliability.

(2) Bivariate correlations between the dependent variable and the independent variable, as well as continuous control variables were assessed using Pearson product-moment correlations. The effect size was assessed using Cohen´s d, which defines effect sizes between r=.10 and .29 as small, between r=.30 and .49 as medium and values between r=.50 and 1 suggest a large effect size (Pallant, 2020, p.140). Additionally, the correlation between Gender Equality and CSBS was compared between male and female refugees. To assess the statistical significance of the difference between the groups, the online calculator recommended by Pallant was used (Pallant, 2020, p. 146f).

(3) Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis was performed to assess the influence of refugee's gender ideology on their sense of belonging. The impact of socio-economic, social, and cultural factors on the relationship was controlled for. The variables were entered into the analysis in four blocks. Based on previous research, after controlling for the effect of sex, in the third block items regarding social contact were added into the model. This was followed by a block with variables measuring additional socio-economic factors associated with social integration.

The final model, including all variables, was assessed on its ability to predict the dependent variable (CSBS). Only variables that statistically significantly explained variance in the model were taken account of. The variance explained by each model was assessed using $R^2$ as well as $R^2$ change to evaluate the influence of each variable group on the dependent variable.

## 5.5. Quality Assurance

### 5.5.1 Missing Cases

Missing values are not uncommon in research and especially within social sciences (Pallant, 2020, p.58). To ensure, that the number of missing cases did not exceed critical values, the sample was limited to participants, who were not only part of both waves, relevant for this

study, but also to those, who were asked questions regarding all relevant concepts as part of the interview (refer to section 6.1.). Missing data was handled throughout the analysis by excluding cases pairwise.

### 5.5.2. Reliability

When using a scale in research, it is important to confirm that the scale is reliable and most importantly measuring whether each of the individual items is measuring the same construct (Pallant, 2020, p.102). The more reliable a scale is the less random error is occurring within it (Pallant, 2020, p.6). There are different aspects that are measured when assessing the reliability of a scale: Internal Consistency and Re-test reliability (Pallant, 2020, p.6). Internal consistency is often measured using Cronbach's alpha (Pallant, 2020, p.6). Values above .7 are indicating good internal consistency, but values above .8 are preferable (Pallant, 2020, p.105). However, the fewer items in a scale, the more common are low values, since Cronbach´s Alpha is quite sensitive (Pallant, 2020, p.102).

Ensuring reliability is especially important in this study, since the CSBS is a relatively newly developed scale. Although the scale is based on previously existing scales measuring belonging, its main implementation was in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey for refugees in 2018 (Fuchs et al., 2021b). Since the scale has not yet been used in more studies, this study will perform internal consistency analysis, using Cronbach´s Alpha, both for the CSBS and Gender Equality to ensure their reliability.

## 5.6 Ethical Consideration

The IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey of refugees is voluntary and completely anonymised (SOEP Group, 2020). Participants are chosen randomised from the AZR (BAMF 2022). Addresses as well as names and other potentially identifying characteristics are kept separately from the questionnaires, therefore preventing any potential identification of participants. Participants can refuse to answer any questions, this is emphasized accordingly by an answer option for most questions. The survey has no influence on the asylum procedure of any participant. All of the above is explained to the participants in person, through a brochure as well as data protection sheets.

# 6. Results

## 6.1. Univariate Analysis

Descriptive analysis was conducted for all variables of the study sample (N= 1625). The sample consists of 58.9% men (957) and 41.1% women (668), the overrepresentation of men within the sample is not unusual as the majority of refugees are young men (Kroh et al., 2016). The average age of the participants was 33 years.

### 6.1.1 Categorical Variables

The majority of participants had a non-temporary residence permit (79.8%). This is to be expected since participants were chosen from the AZR (Goebel et al., 2019). Only 21 (1.3%) participants did not hold any residence permit in Germany at the time of the study. 53.8% of participants held Syrian citizenship, followed by Afghanistan (14.7%) and Iraq (13.2%) (Appendix 1). Given the sampling of refugees and asylum seekers that came to Germany between 2013 and 2016, this distribution was not surprising. Most participants were unemployed (78.2%). About two third of participants were married or in a legal partnership (64.7%). Most participants were Muslims (75.1%). Refer to Table 1 for descriptive statistics of all categorical variables.

|                                      | **Frequency** | **Percent** |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| **Sex**                              |               |             |
| Male                                 | 957           | 58.9%       |
| Female                               | 668           | 41.1%       |
|                                      |               |             |
| **Marital Status**                   |               |             |
| Single                               | 486           | 29.9%       |
| Married/Partnership                  | 1052          | 64.7%       |
| Divorced/Terminated Partnership      | 54            | 3.3%        |
| Partner deceased                     | 30            | 1.8%        |
| Missing                              | 3             | 0.2%        |
|                                      |               |             |
| **Residence Status**                 |               |             |
| Temporary Residence                  | 288           | 17.7%       |
| Residence Permit                     | 1297          | 79.8%       |
| No Residence Permit                  | 21            | 1.3 %       |
| Missing                              | 19            | 1.2%        |
|                                      |               |             |
| **Employment Status**                |               |             |
| Full-/Part-Time Employed             | 241           | 14.8%       |
| Other Work                           | 114           | 7.0%        |
| Not Employed                         | 1270          | 78.2%       |
|                                      |               |             |
| **Religious Affiliation**            |               |             |
| Islamic Denomination                 | 1220          | 75.1%       |
| Other Denomination                   | 132           | 8.1%        |
| No Denomination                      | 77            | 4.7%        |
| Christian Religious Community        | 177           | 10.9%       |
| Missing                              | 19            | 1.2%        |

*Table 1 Frequencies of Categorical Variables, N=1625*

## 6.1.2 Main Study Variables

Gender Equality scores ranged from 1 to 7, with a mean of 5.65 (SD=1.22). CSBS scores ranged from 1 to 5, with a mean of 3.41 (SD=1.18). Indicating both, relatively egalitarian gender ideology and less challenged sense of belonging. The preliminary analysis showed that both the CSBS (Skewness = -0,18, Kurtosis = -1.003) and Gender Equality (Skewness = -0.78, Kurtosis = -0.035) were slightly skewed to the right. While normal distribution is a common assumption, positive and negative skewedness of variables is not uncommon within the social sciences (Pallant, 2020, p.57). All individual items making up the CSBS and Gender Equality scale were reasonably normally distributed, although slightly skewed to the right (Appendix 2 and 3). See Table 2 for descriptive statistics of continuous variables.

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic |
| **CSBS** | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3.4088 | 1.17869 | -.181 | -1.003 |
| **Gender Equality** | 1,00 | 7,00 | 5.6550 | 1.22189 | -.781 | -.035 |
| **Time spent with people from origin country** | 1,00 | 6,00 | 3.0372 | 1.53557 | .356 | -.858 |
| **Time spent with Germans** | 1,00 | 6,00 | 3.5114 | 1.87876 | .028 | -1.484 |
| **Time spent with people from other countries** | 1,00 | 6,00 | 3.9132 | 1.89216 | -.313 | -1.411 |
| **Contact to Germans** | 1,00 | 6,00 | 4.3637 | 1.42917 | -.597 | -.670 |
| **German Skills** | 1,00 | 5,00 | 2.9119 | 0.96717 | .017 | -.566 |

*Table 2 Descriptives Continuous Variables*

Most participants reported spending time with Germans (M = 3.51, SD = 1.88) and people from their home country (M = 3.04, SD = 1.53) about once a week, while they spent time with people from other countries about once a month (M = 3.91, SD = 1.90). The variable measuring the time respondents spent with people from their country of origin was somewhat normal distributed, although slightly skewed to the left (Skewness = 0.36, Kurtosis = -0.86). Both the

variable measuring the time respondents spent with people from other countries (Skewness = 0.31, Kurtosis = -1.42) and the variable measuring the time respondents spent with people from Germany (Skewness = 0.028, Kurtosis = -1.48) had negative kurtosis, indicating a very flat distribution (Appendix 4 and 5).

The participants had relatively little contact with Germans, an average every month (M=4.36, SD=1.43). The variable was lightly skewed to the right towards less contact with Germans (Skewness=-0.60, Kurtosis=-0.67). Most participants reported their German skills as average (M=2.91, SD=0.97). The variable was reasonably normally distributed (Skewness=0.017, Kurtosis=-0.57).

### 6.1.3. Reliability

Internal consistency is measured using Cronbach´s Alpha (Pallant, 2020, p.102). Values above .7 are indicating good internal consistency, but values above .8 are preferable (Pallant, 2020, p.105). However, the fewer items in a scale, the more common are low values, since Cronbach´s Alpha is quite sensitive (Pallant, 2020, p.102). Both scales showed good internal consistency. CSBS reported Cronbach´s Alpha value of 0.80. Gender Equality had a Cronbach´s Alpha value of 0.55.

## 6.2 Bivariate Analysis

Using the Pearson product-moment correlations the relationship between Gender Equality and the CSBS, as well as German skills, contact with Germans and the time spent with Germans, people from the same country and other countries were assessed. Preliminary analyses, as described in section 6.1 above, were conducted for all variables to ensure no violations of assumptions.

There was a very small positive, but not statistically significant correlation between Gender Equality and CSBS, $r=0.02$, $n=1367$, $p= .50$, with egalitarian gender ideologies associated with a less challenged sense of belonging. German Skills were slightly negatively and statistically significantly correlated with both Gender Equality ($r= -0.17$, $n=1491$, $p < .001$) and CSBS ($r= -0.15$, $n=1478$, $p < .001$). Low German skills were associated with a more traditional gender role ideology and a more challenged sense of belonging. Similarly, was less contact with Germans associated with a more traditional gender role ideology ($r= -0.12$, $n=1424$, $p < .001$) and a more challenged sense of belonging ($r= -0.16$, $n=1415$, $p < .001$). The same goes for time spent with Germans and people from other countries. For both less time spent was associated with a more traditional gender role ideology and a more challenged sense of belonging.

Time spent with people from their home country on the other hand, had a small negative and not statistically significant correlation with Gender Equality, $r= 0.04$, $n=1482$, $p= .12$, with less time spent with people from one's country of origin associated with more egalitarian gender role ideology and a less challenged sense of belonging. There was a small negative and statistically significant correlation between time spent with people from their home country and CSBS, $r= -0.06$, $n=1471$, $p= .03$. Less time spent with people from one's country of origin was associated with a more challenged sense of belonging. See Table 3 for more detailed information.

| | | Gender Equality | CSBS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender Equality** | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .018 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .498 |
| | N | 1491 | 1367 |
| **CSBS** | Pearson Correlation | .018 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .498 | |
| | N | 1367 | 1478 |
| **German Skills** | Pearson Correlation | -.172** | -.155** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | <.001 | <.001 |
| | N | 1491 | 1478 |
| **Contact to Germans** | Pearson Correlation | -.115** | -.158** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | <.001 | <.001 |
| | N | 1424 | 1415 |
| **Time spent with people from other countries** | Pearson Correlation | -.044 | -.074** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .092 | .004 |
| | N | 1480 | 1471 |
| **Time spent with people from origin country** | Pearson Correlation | .041 | -.057* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .119 | .030 |
| | N | 1482 | 1471 |
| **Time spent with Germans** | Pearson Correlation | -.132** | -.182** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | <.001 | <.001 |
| | N | 1484 | 1471 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

*Table 3 Pearson Product Moment Correlations*

The correlation between Gender Equality and CSBS was compared for male and female refugees. The relationship between Gender Equality and CSBS for men showed a very small positive correlation, r=0.05, n=803, p= .13, with egalitarian gender ideologies associated with a less challenged sense of belonging. For female refugees on the other hand the correlation between Gender Equality and CSBS was even smaller but negative, r=-0.02, n=564, p= .60, with egalitarian gender ideology associated with a more challenged sense of belonging. See Table 4 for more details.

The statistical significance of this difference, was analysed, using the calculator recommended by Pallant (Pallant, 2020, p.146f). The results indicate that the difference is not statistically significant, p (two-tailed) is .57.

| Sex | | | CSBS | Gender Equality |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Male** | **CSBS** | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .053 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .135 |
| | | N | 871 | 803 |
| | **Gender Equality** | Pearson Correlation | .053 | 1 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .135 | |
| | | N | 803 | 876 |
| **Female** | **CSBS** | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -.022 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .599 |
| | | N | 607 | 564 |
| | **Gender Equality** | Pearson Correlation | -.022 | 1 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .599 | |
| | | N | 564 | 615 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Table 4 Correlation Coefficients comparing Male and Female*

## 6.3. Hierarchical Regression

Hierarchical Multiple Regression was performed to assess the influence of refugee's gender ideology on their social integration, using CSBS and Gender Equality, while controlling for the influence of gender in the second model. The third model controlled for the impact of age, contact with Germans, time spent with Germans, people from one's home country and other countries. Finally, employment status, marital status, residence status and religious denomination were controlled for in the fourth model. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of assumptions (Appendix 6). The categorical items employment status, marital status and religious denomination were dummy coded, in order to meet assumption of linearity for multiple regression analysis (Pallant, 2016, p. 156). The item Residence Status was further collapsed to the following: (1) Residence Permit (2) No Residence Permit to ensure that the assumption of no multicollinearity was not violated. All tolerance Values are above .10 (from 0.24 to 0.99), supporting the absence of multicollinearity (Pallant, 2016, p.164).

After the variable Gender Equality was entered in Step 1 of the analysis 0% of the variance in the challenged sense of belonging was explained. Entering sex in the second step, explained 0.3% of the variance in the challenged sense of belonging, $F_{(2, 1364)} = 1.75$, $p = .17$. Model 3 of the analysis included the variables age, contact with Germans, time spent with Germans, people from one's home country and other countries. The total variance explained by the model at this point was 4,4%, $F_{(8, 1358)} = 7.86$, $p < .001$. In the final step the items employment status, marital status and religious denomination were entered into the model. The total variance

explained by the model was increased by 1,5% after these items were included, F change (9, 1349) = 2.36, p = .012. This brought the overall variance of a challenged sense of belonging to 5.9%, F (17, 1349) = 4.98, p < 0.001. Only Model 3 (p <.001) and 4 (p <.001) were statistically significant. See Table 5 for more details.

| | | | | | Change Statistics | | | | |
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .018 | .000 | .000 | 1.17893 | .000 | .460 | 1 | 1365 | .498 |
| 2 | .051 | .003 | .001 | 1.17805 | .002 | 3.031 | 1 | 1364 | .082 |
| 3 | .210 | .044 | .039 | 1.15572 | .042 | 9.871 | 6 | 1358 | <.001 |
| 4 | .243 | .059 | .047 | 1.15052 | .015 | 2.365 | 9 | 1349 | .012 |

*Table 5 Model Summary Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis*

In the final model only three variables were making a unique and significant contribution to the total variance of the dependent variable, CSBS, explained by the model (see Table 6). They were assessing firstly German skills (p = .001), time spent with German people (p <.001). Every point-increase on the German Skill variable, indicates a decrease of 0.13 on the CSBS (β = - 0.13, 95% CI [-0.21, -0.05], p = .001). This indicates that, the worse German skills, the more challenged was the sense of belonging. Similarly, with every one-point increase of the variable Time spent with German People, there was a decrease of 0.08 on the CSBS scale (β = -0.08, 95% CI [-0.12, -0.03], p <.001). Again, this indicated that the less time spent with Germans, the more challenged becomes the sense of belonging. When looking at the standardized beta coefficient Time spent with German people (b = -0.123) seems to have had a slighter stronger effect on CSBS, than German Skills (b = -0.107). The variable measuring German Skills reported a partial correlation value of sr=-0.089, while the variable measuring time spent with Germans reported a partial correlation value of sr=-0.091. This indicates that time spent with Germans contributed slightly more to the variance explained. The variables had a reasonably strong correlation between them (r = 0.39).

And lastly the dummy coded variable Religious Affiliation was making a significant contribution. The difference in means for the three categories, Islamic Denomination, Other Denomination and Christian Religious Community, was significantly different (p = .15, p = .006 and p = .002). Only the difference between No Denomination and Other Denomination or Christian Religious Community was statistically significant. The difference between Islamic Denomination and No Denomination was not statistically significant (p = .15). This indicates that the sense of belonging for people with no domination was similar to the sense of belonging of people of Islamic denomination, although the sense of belonging was slightly less challenged for people of Islamic Denomination ($\beta$ = 0.21, 95% CI [-0.08, 0.50], p = .15). Even less challenged was the sense of belonging for people who belong either to another Denomination ($\beta$ = 0.49, 95% CI [0.14, 0.85], p = .006) or to a Christian Religious Community ($\beta$ = 0.52, 95% CI [0.19, 0.86], p = .002), compared to people who are not affiliated with any denomination.

| | Model 1 | | | | | Model 2 | | | | | Model 3 | | | | | Model 4 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | β | SE | 95%CI | | p | β | SE | 95%CI | | p | β | SE | 95%CI | | p | β | SE | 95%CI | | p |
| | | | LL | UL | | | | LL | UL | | | | LL | UL | | | | LL | UL | |
| **Gender Equality** | .02 | .03 | -.03 | .07 | .50 | .02 | .03 | -.03 | .07 | .39 | -.02 | .03 | -.07 | .03 | .49 | -.02 | .03 | -.08 | .03 | .35 |
| **Sex** | | | | | | -.11 | .07 | -.24 | .01 | .08 | .04 | .07 | -.10 | .17 | .59 | .04 | .07 | -.10 | .18 | .57 |
| **Age** | | | | | | | | | | | .001 | .003 | -.005 | .007 | .83 | -.001 | .004 | -.008 | .006 | .85 |
| **Contact to Germans** | | | | | | | | | | | -.03 | .03 | -.09 | .03 | .34 | -.02 | .03 | -.09 | .04 | .47 |
| **German Skills** | | | | | | | | | | | -.12 | .04 | -.20 | -.04 | .002 | -.13 | .04 | -.21 | -.05 | .001 |
| **Time spent with Germans** | | | | | | | | | | | -.07 | .02 | -.12 | -.03 | .001 | -.08 | .02 | -.12 | -.03 | < .001 |
| **Time spent with people from origin country** | | | | | | | | | | | -.03 | .02 | -.07 | .009 | .12 | -.04 | .02 | -.08 | .006 | .09 |
| **Time spent with people from other countries** | | | | | | | | | | | .001 | .02 | -.03 | .04 | .98 | .008 | .02 | -.03 | .04 | .67 |
| **Employment Status** Full-/Part-Time | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .13 | .10 | -.06 | .33 | .18 |
| **Employment Status** Other Work | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .10 | .13 | -.25 | .27 | .94 |
| **Marital Status** Married/Partnership | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .07 | .08 | -.09 | .24 | .39 |
| **Marital Status** Divorced/Terminated Partnership | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -.17 | .19 | -.54 | .19 | .36 |
| **Marital Status** Partner deceased | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .14 | .27 | -.37 | .67 | .60 |
| **Religious Affiliation** Islamic Denomination | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .21 | .15 | -.08 | .50 | .15 |
| **Religious Affiliation** Other Denomination | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .49 | .18 | .14 | .85 | .006 |
| **Religious Affiliation** Christian Religious Community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .52 | .17 | .19 | .86 | .002 |
| **Residence Status** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -.07 | .28 | -.61 | .48 | .81 |

*Table 6 Hierarchical Multiple Regression Summary*
   *Note. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit*

# 7. Discussion

## 7.1. Discussion of Findings

This study examined the effect of gender ideology among refugees on their sense of belonging in the context of socially integrating into German society. Ager and Strang's (2008) framework of social integration, as well as the framework of belonging developed by Allen et al. (2021), suggest that cultural knowledge and shared values are an important part of integration and belonging, in addition to a variety of other factors. Shared values are generally considered to be an important aspect of community building (Fuchs et al., 2021a). Using data from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Surveys for refugees, this study could not find any evidence that gender ideology of refugees is associated with their sense of belonging. Instead, this study found other markers of social integration, such as language, to be more important for a less challenged sense of belonging.

### 7.1.1. Gender Ideology of Refugees

Following the "refugee crisis" in 2015/16 there was a rise of populist and nationalist narratives, which heavily rely on the othering of Muslim refugees and their perceived gender ideology, across Europe and in Germany (Hess et al., 2016). Those narratives are based on to assumptions: firstly that Muslim refugees inherently hold traditional gender ideology, also described as oppressive (Lutz, 2010). The second assumption is that gender equality is "inherent" to German culture (Hess et al., 2016). Finally coming to the conclusion that, the gender ideology of Muslim refugees is threatening German culture and Muslim refugees should not and also can never belong to German society (Hess et al., 2016).

The vast majority of the participants, that provided their religious affiliation in this studies sample, were Muslim (75.1%). This fits with statistics from the time the survey was taken, that suggest that refugees were from predominantly Muslim countries (BAMF, 2018). The dominance of Muslim refugees in the sample, suggests that the sample is appropriate to use to investigate the claims made by populist groups in Germany on the gender ideology of Muslim refugees and the subsequent questioning of their belonging in German society.

This study found that egalitarian gender ideologies were relatively widespread among the participants. Since there is not conclusive research on the gender values held by refugees in general (e.g., Brücker et al 2016a; Brücker et al. 2016b), the prevalence of egalitarian gender role values among refugees, found in this study, is not surprising. There has been evidence that

the support for gender equality, which was measured in this study, as a concept is high among refugee men (Brücker et al., 2016a), which is supported by the results of this study.

When comparing the gender ideology among refugees and the German majority population, based on previous studies, this study cannot find a significant difference. Previous studies found that egalitarian gender ideology is widespread in German society (Grunnow et al., 2018). This study suggests, firstly that egalitarian gender ideologies are the most widespread gender ideology among refugees in Germany and secondly that there is no significant difference between refugees and the German majority population. Again, these findings align with several studies (e.g., Brücker et al., 2016b). However, the findings on this specific subject have previously been very ambiguous.

There are two possible ways this discrepancy between refugee's individual gender ideology and the gender ideology found in their home countries, which studies have found to be significantly different from gender ideologies in western countries, can be explained (Fuchs et al., 2021a). Firstly the misconception, that is often made is that communities and the values shared within them are much less diverse than they are in reality and that the individual subsequently must "bring" the values of their home country to the host country (Fuchs et al., 2021a). In reality, values, such as gender ideology, are often much more diverse within communities and therefore more subjective to each individual. Fuchs et.al. (2021a) have suggested that immigrants might choose the countries they migrate to, based on the political and ethical values they hold, among other things. But this seems less plausible for refugees. Secondly concepts like "acculturation" (Fuchs et al., 2021a) or assimilation (Schneider & Crul, 2010), could also explain the difference in gender ideology between refugees and their home countries, as well as the more egalitarian gender ideology observed in this study. It is precisely because of the constant discrimination and confrontation with Islamophobia, based on the assumption of too "traditional" gender ideology, that immigrants in general need to adapt quickly to the gender ideology held by the majority society (Ng, 2022).

### 7.1.2. Influence of Gender Ideology on Sense of Belonging

Having a sense of belonging has been recognized by scholars as a natural human need, which is associated with good physical and mental health (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Fuchs et al., 2021b). Belonging is here a subjective feeling of being safe and at home (Allen et al., 2021; Yuval-Davis, 2006). The concept of belonging can also be used as an indication for successful integration of refugees, whose sense of belonging is often violently disrupted as a result of

forced migration (Fuchs et al., 2021b). Both within frameworks of integration and belonging, are shared cultural values recognized as central (Ager & Strang, 2008; Fuchs et al., 2021b; Boccagni & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2021).

This study found, that holding more egalitarian gender ideology is associated with a slightly less challenged sense of belonging, but this association was not statistically significant. When including other factors of social integration, this association disappeared completely, suggesting that the gender ideology of refugees has no effect on their sense of belonging.

While this result is a little surprising, the fact that this study found refugees to have a more egalitarian gender ideology (refer to section 7.1.1.), no matter the reason, can potentially explain the finding that gender ideology does not influence the sense of belonging of refugees. It is after all the difference in values within a community that can potentially lead to conflict and challenge an individual's or group's sense of belonging (Fuchs, et al., 2021a). With no apparent differences in values regarding gender equality, there is no basis for conflict, which could in turn challenge the sense of belonging of refugees.

This study could not find a statistically significant difference between the effect of gender ideology on sense of belonging of male and female refugees. Although the small difference in effect, that was found is still interesting to observe. Studies have previously found that refugee women with more traditional gender ideology tend to be less integrated into the labour market, while refugee men tend to be more integrated into the labour market (Al-Mantila & Fleischmann, 2018). This study found the opposite, when assessing refugees' sense of belonging. Refugee men with more traditional gender ideologies seem to have a slightly more challenged sense of belonging, compared to more traditional refugee women, who have a slightly less challenged sense of belonging. But again, this observed difference was not statistically significant.

The argument of incompatible differences in gender ideologies between refugees and German mainstream society is only brought up in the context of Muslim refugees, suggesting, that the main concern might not be gender equality after all. This is especially interesting, since there is little research on the different influence culture and religion have on an individual's gender ideology (Ng, 2022). There are however studies suggesting that religion is affecting integration in general, for example religious women, especially Muslim women, are less likely to be integrated into the labour market (Kalmijn & Kraaykamp, 2018; Röder, 2014; Kanas & Müller,

2021). The influence of religion on sense of belonging will be discussed in the following section.

### 7.1.3. Influence of Social Integration Factors on Sense of Belonging

The ability to adapt to accept and adjust to ethical values of one´s surrounding society and communities is a central part of belonging, and an individual's sense of belonging is greatly influenced by a variety of circumstances and environmental factors (Allen et al., 2021). In the context of refugees' integration in this study, those factors are defined by Ager and Strang's (2008) framework of integration. It should be said that nearly all participants for the IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Survey for refugees, had already gotten a residence permit at the time of the survey. Following Ager and Strang (2008) this is the foundation for integration to take place.

While the framework covers a variety of aspects influencing integration, this study found that especially two factors were found to significantly explain a small percentage of variance in the refugee's sense of belonging. Both German Skills and Time spent with Germans made a statistically significant contribution to explain variance in the sense of belonging. Worse German skills and less time spent with Germans is associated with a more challenged sense of belonging. This is a little surprising, since within the European context language and cultural acknowledgment are the aspects deemed most important for successful integration (Schneider & Crul, 2010). Ager and Strang (2008) define both aspects as a facilitator for integration. Just as language is central to integration, the discourse surrounding belonging, also acknowledges language or the ability to communicate effectively, as essential (Allen et al., 2021; Yuval-Davis, 2006).

This study found good German skills and more time spent with Germans, not only to be associated with a less challenged sense of belonging, but also with a more egalitarian gender ideology, which is supporting findings made by previous studies (Hartmann & Steinmann, 2020). This could either suggest that more contact with the majority population is accelerating the acculturation of refugees to German society (Fuchs et al., 2021a). Or that Muslim refugees gender ideology is more egalitarian, that often assumed, which is supported by studies (Brücker et al., 2016a),

On the other hand, more time spent with people from their home country has a small association with more traditional gender ideology. But interestingly the more time was spent with people from the refugee's home country, the less challenged the sense of belonging. This suggests that having secure sense of belonging is not necessarily related to integrating into the majority

society. The concept of "blocked acculturation" could explain the higher prevalence of traditional values in Muslim-majority communities in western countries, as a direct consequence of experienced discrimination, which leads to a higher identification with the often more traditional values of their home country (Ng, 2022). However, this potential forming of "ethnic enclaves", although controversial in the European context, are accepted as markers of successful integration in the US (Schneider & Crul, 2010). The sharing of one´s culture, through religious events, food or music, can create a safe space for refugees in the midst of social discrimination (Boccagni & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2021). Therefore, being a facilitator of a new sense of belonging for refugees, even though this approach might not include the assimilation of Muslim refugees into European majority culture. The sense of home and safety, which is especially important in the context of forced migration is still restored (Fuchs et al., 2021b).

Further supporting the potential importance of preserving one´s culture and values, this study found additionally that religious affiliation is impacting the sense of belonging of refugees and that those, who are affiliated with any religion, have generally a less challenged sense of belonging that those who are not affiliated with any religion. While being Muslim leads to slightly more challenged sense of belonging, than being Christian or being part of any other religion, this is not surprising given the constant discrimination faced by Muslim refugees in Europe (Ng, 2022). Religion as means of connecting and building a community on the other hand is perspective recently even taken by the EU (Davaki, 2021).

The argument can be made, that it is not in fact the traditional values of refuges hindering their integration into German majority society, but instead the hostile environment created by Islamophobic narratives.

## 7.2. Gender Ideology and The Politics of Belonging

Despite the consensus on the importance of shared values, including gender ideology, for successful integration and a sense of belonging, this study could not find any evidence that there is in fact an association between the two, when defining belonging as a subjective feeling, as described above. However, the discussions surrounding integration of Muslim refugees into German society are highly political. The following section will therefore investigate this narrative from a more political perspective.

Yuval-Davis (2006) describes the politics of belonging as the performative act of creating an imagined homogeneity within a nation, which is then used to construct imagined boundaries of a nation state. Within this "[…] different projects of the politics of belonging […]" belonging

is based on different prerequisites (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 209). These prerequisites can range from speaking a language, to origin, to having a certain set of values (Yuval-Davis, 2006). While some of these requirements, such as speaking a language, is relatively easy to fulfil others, like one´s origin is less easy to fulfil and also more racialized (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Certain values as the main requisite for belonging, could potentially be one of the requirements of acceptance and belonging most easily fulfilled, but:

"*Emancipatory ethical and political values can be transformed, under certain conditions, into inherent personal attributes of members of particular national and regional collectivities (Britain, the West) and, thus, in practice, become exclusionary rather than permeable signifiers of boundaries.*" (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 212f).

Political and ethical values, such as gender ideology, are no longer independent from a person's social location (e.g., "race", origin, gender, etc.), but instead are constructed as one and the same (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Muslim refugees for example are seen as inherently traditional when it comes to gender ideology, while the German society is seen as inherently egalitarian. Both groups are constructed as homogenous communities representing the complete opposite of each other. It is the constant reproducing of those imagined boundaries, that is allowing nations to form an imagined sense of belonging, based on a fabricated idea of similarities (Yuval-Davis, 2006). While the boundaries are imagined, they do have real repercussions, since they are the basis for the decision, who belongs and who does not belong within a society (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Societies and nations are imagined communities, that define themselves through constant exclusion of others (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

While gender ideology might not have an impact on an individual's sense of belonging, as part of the politics of belonging, the discourse surrounding gender ideology is a central aspect used to create societal cohesion within nations, by exclusion of anything outside of constantly reproduced imaginary boundaries. This whole process is highly racialized, as can be observed in the aftermath of the 2015/16 "refugee crisis".

## 7.3 Methodological Limitations and Future Research

The results should be interpreted with caution, due to flaws in the study design, as well as the limited scope of this study. Limitations include among other things missing cases and the one-dimensionality of some of the concepts and variables used.

### 7.3.1. Missing Data

It is important to note that two variables, Religious Affiliation and Gender Equality, were not included in all versions of the survey, leading to substantial number of missing cases. This was combated, by only including participants, who were presented with questionnaires containing all relevant items. Results were nevertheless interpreted with the awareness that, missing cases could have effects on the estimates and is limiting the generalizability of this study (Dong & Peng, 2013). Missing cases were excluded pairwise.

### 7.3.2. Participants/Questionnaire

Although the vast majority of participants had already a residence permit at the time of the survey and all participants were additionally assured that their participation in the study or specific answers would not affect their legal status in any way, social desirability effects cannot be eliminated completely. There is some risk, that questions were misunderstood or wrongly translated, since the survey was conducted in multiple languages, sometimes using translators.

Additionally, there is the possibility that, especially in light of public discussion at the time of the survey, participants answers were influenced. This effect could possibly be multiplied by the fact, that both the variable Gender Equality and CSBS, were self-reported. Including a more multidimensional concept of assessing gender ideology would potentially have been able to capture gender ideology of refugees more accurately.

The survey measured sex exclusively as binary, including only the options of male or female, and made no distinction between sex and gender (SOEP Group, 2020). This is not only discriminatory against any person identifying as neither male or female but is consequently exclusionary and can lead to gender misclassification. Since this study is using secondary data, this limitation can only be acknowledged and considered when interpreting results.

### 7.3.3. Future Research

Belonging is a dynamic process and experience, that changes based on a variety of social, cultural and environmental aspects (Allen et al., 2021). Since this study is cross-sectional all results are only capturing a snapshot of refugees' sense of belonging. In future a longitudinal perspective on how refugees' sense of belonging is possibly changing over time would be ideal to accurately depict the dynamic and subjective nature of belonging.

Since previous studies have not come to a unanimous decision, regarding potential differences in value between the refugee population and the German majority population, an in-depth study

on value differences between refugees and German Majority population could help bringing more clarity to the topic.

As mentioned above, the implementation of a more multidimensional concept to measure gender ideology, could in future research bring a more in-depth understanding of refugees and German majority populations gender ideology.

## 7.4 Conclusion

This study has not only found no association between gender ideology and sense of belonging of refugees, but it has also found no evidence for significantly different gender ideologies among refugees and the German mainstream society. The factors found to influence sense of belonging the most are: German Skills, Time spent with Germans and Religious affiliation.

While there are certainly challenges, that come with the integration of refugees, and some of them might even be due to a more traditional gender ideologies among especially Muslim refugees, as studies have found (Kallmijn & Kraaykamp, 2018; Röder, 2014; Kanas & Müller, 2021), this study could find no connection between gender ideology and a subjective sense of belonging. Suggesting that populist narratives regarding refugees' incompatibility with German society, are less based on refugees' actual sense of belonging to German society and can rather be seen as product of exclusionary politics of belonging, than based in significant value differences, observed in reality.

From the perspective of politics of belonging in the context of the integration of Muslim refugees into German society, having an egalitarian gender ideology is constructed as a requirement to belong to German society. At the same time having an egalitarian gender ideology is irrevocably connected to be being German (or European), while Muslim refugees are automatically assumed to be inherently traditional regarding gender roles. Since gender ideology is not an ethical or political value in this particular context, but instead and inherent characteristic of specific communities, gender ideology indeed becomes an insurmountable barrier of belonging, at least from the political perspective. This study has shown, that from a subjective perspective gender ideology has no effect on refugees´ sense of belonging. The belief that refugees' assumed gender ideology is the biggest obstacle in their integration process is instrumentalising gender ideology to push racist and Islamophobic narratives under the guise of protecting an imagined German culture and society.

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# Appendix

| | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Afghanistan | 239 | 14,7% |
| Albania | 6 | 0,4% |
| Armenia | 3 | 0,2% |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 1 | 0,1% |
| Eritrea | 59 | 3,6% |
| Gambia | 4 | 0,2% |
| Georgia | 6 | 0,4% |
| India | 2 | 0,1% |
| Iraq | 214 | 13,2% |
| Iran | 36 | 2,2% |
| Kosovan | 3 | 0,2% |
| Macedonia | 2 | 0,1% |
| Nigeria | 15 | 0,9% |
| Pakistan | 30 | 1,8% |
| Russian Federation | 7 | 0,4% |
| Serbia | 5 | 0,3% |
| Somalia | 29 | 1,8% |
| Syria | 874 | 53,8% |
| Ukraine | 1 | 0,1% |
| Other nationality | 53 | 3,3% |
| No Nationality | 36 | 2,2% |

*Appendix 1 Frequency Citizenship Variable*

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic |
| **Gender Equality1** | 1,00 | 7,00 | 5.9886 | 1.72078 | -1.705 | 1.882 |
| **Gender Equality2** | 1,00 | 7,00 | 5.8598 | 1.80156 | -1.551 | 1.308 |
| **Gender Equality3** | 1,00 | 7,00 | 5.4114 | 2.15309 | -.962 | -.583 |
| **Gender Equality4** | 1,00 | 7,00 | 5.9003 | 2.17501 | -1.624 | .822 |
| **Gender Equality5** | 1,00 | 7,00 | 5.0930 | 2.33863 | -.730 | -1.064 |

*Appendix 2 Descriptive Statistics: Items Gender Equality*

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic |
| **CSBS1** | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3.3340 | 1.53136 | -.201 | -1.476 |
| **CSBS2** | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3.4906 | 1.46840 | -.333 | -1.364 |
| **CSBS3** | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3.1020 | 1.57251 | -.030 | -1.548 |
| **CSBS4** | 1,00 | 5,00 | 3.6956 | 1.43523 | -.583 | -1.133 |

*Appendix 3 Descriptive Statistics: CSBS Items*
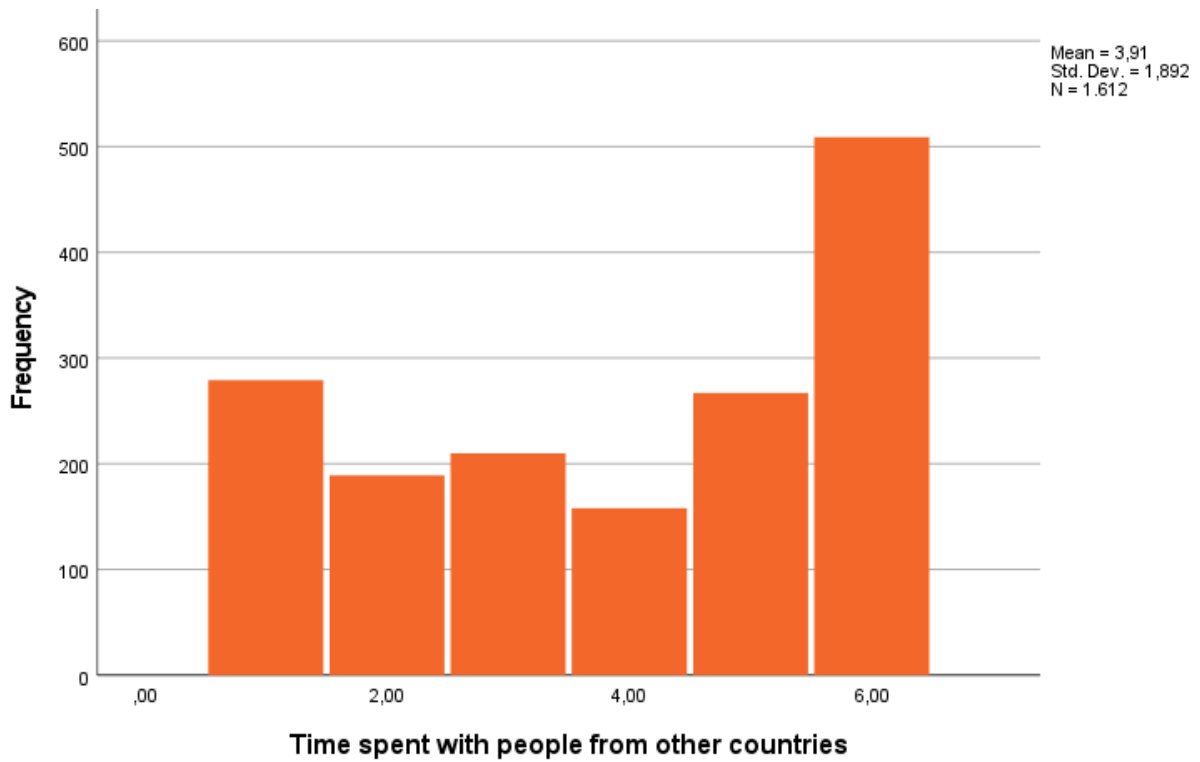


*Appendix 4 Distribution Time spent with people from other countries*
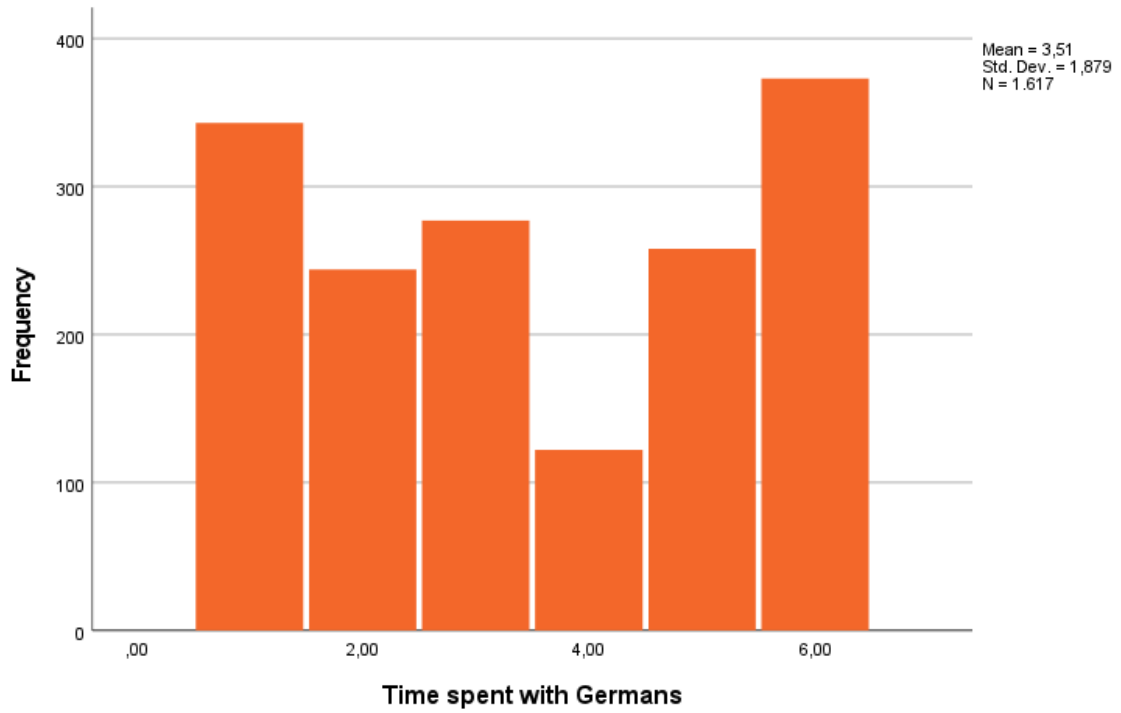
*Appendix 5 Distribution Time spent with Germans*
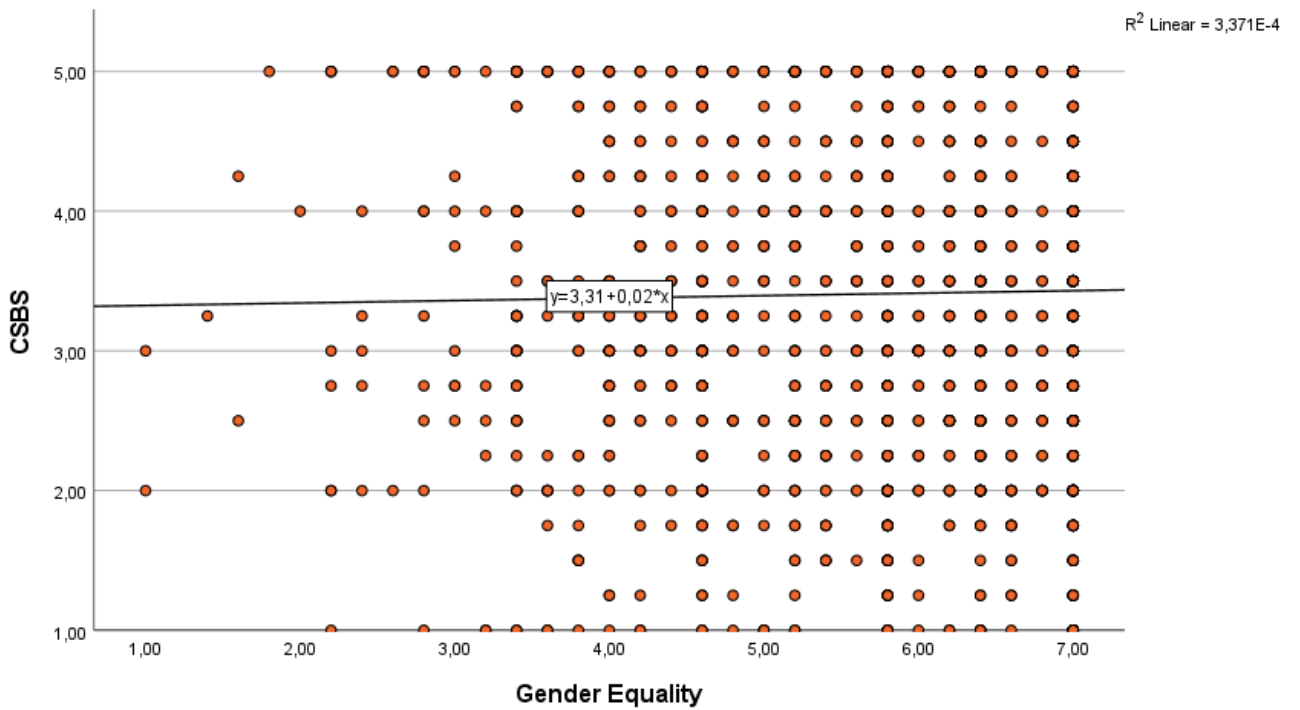


*Appendix 6 Scatterplot CSBS by Gender Equality*

## Datenweitergabevertrag

## 6328

Zwischen dem

**DIW Berlin**
Deutsches Institut für
Wirtschaftsforschung
Mohrenstraße 58
10117 Berlin

und

**University of Bergen**
Department of Health Promotion and
Development
5009 Bergen

einerseits

andererseits
-nachstehend Datenempfänger genannt-

wird folgender Vertrag geschlossen:

1  Das DIW Berlin räumt dem Datenempfänger das einfache Nutzungsrecht an den Mikrodaten (im Folgenden SOEP-Daten genannt) des Sozio-oekonomischen Panels (SOEP) ein.

2  Umfang und Inhalt des Nutzungsrechts sind an folgende Bedingungen geknüpft:

2.1  Der Datenempfänger verpflichtet sich, die Daten nicht an andere Personen – außer den unter 2.3 genannten datenschutzrechtlich verpflichteten Mitarbeitern am Forschungsvorhaben – oder an andere Einrichtungen weiterzugeben oder sie ihnen zugänglich zu machen. Dies gilt auch für modifizierte Daten.

2.2  Die Daten dürfen nur in der eigenen wissenschaftlichen Forschung der Datenempfänger eingesetzt werden. Eine Nutzung für gewerbliche oder sonstige wirtschaftliche Zwecke ist nicht gestattet; hierüber muss gegebenenfalls eine gesonderte Vereinbarung getroffen werden. Nicht gestattet ist auch die Nutzung des vollständigen Datensatzes für die Lehre. Für diesen Zweck dürfen ausschließlich SOEP-Daten aus der um 50% der Fälle reduzierten Lehrversion des Datensatzes genutzt werden. Die Lehrversion des Datensatzes übermittelt das DIW Berlin dem Datenempfänger auf gesonderte Anfrage.

2.3  Die SOEP-Daten dürfen ausschließlich in folgendem Forschungsvorhaben eingesetzt werden:

The relationship between gender role values and social integration among refugees in Germany

Sie dürfen zu keinem anderen als dem angegebenen Zweck eingesetzt werden.

Die Datennutzung erfolgt ausschließlich durch die beim Datenempfänger tätigen Personen, die mit der Bearbeitung des o.g. Forschungsvorhabens betraut sind. Dies sind:

Prof Helga Bjørnøy Urke (Projektleitung)

sowie Jule Marie Zimmermann

Der Datenempfänger stellt sicher, dass die oben genannten zur Datennutzung berechtigten Personen die Vorgaben einhalten zu deren Erfüllung er auf Grund dieses Vertrages verpflichtet ist und dass sie die SOEP-Daten in gleicher Weise behandeln, wie nach den gesetzlichen Bestimmungen personenbezogene Daten zu behandeln sind.

2.4  Es dürfen keine Re-Anonymisierungsmaßnahmen durchgeführt und keine Einzeldatensätze veröffentlicht werden. Eine Zusammenführung mit nicht-anonymisierten SOEP-Daten ist nicht gestattet. Verknüpfungen mit anderen personen- bzw.
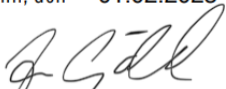
*Appendix 7 Contract for Data-Transfer1/2*

haushaltsbezogenen Daten (zum Beispiel Verfahren des Statistical Matchings) bedürfen der schriftlichen Zustimmung durch das Forschungsdatenzentrum des SOEP.

2.5 Der Datenempfänger stellt für die Daten die vom Bundesdatenschutzgesetz oder dem jeweiligen Landesdatenschutzgesetz geforderten technisch-organisatorischen Maßnahmen zum Schutz personenbezogener Daten sicher. Das DIW Berlin stellt dazu eine Übersicht zur Verfügung. Im Übrigen gelten die gesetzlichen Bestimmungen zum Datenschutz in Deutschland.

2.6 Nach Abschluss des in Ziffer 2.3 genannten Forschungsprojekts sind die übermittelten SOEP-Daten, evtl. Sicherungskopien, Auszugsdateien und Hilfsdateien zu löschen. Dem DIW Berlin sind die Beendigung der Arbeiten sowie das Datum und die Art und Weise der Löschung schriftlich mitzuteilen.

2.7 Die mit SOEP-Daten erzielten veröffentlichten Ergebnisse und darauf Bezug nehmende Veröffentlichungen werden dem DIW Berlin zum Zwecke der Aufnahme in die SOEPlit Datenbank kostenlos zur Verfügung gestellt.

2.8 Bei der Veröffentlichung Ihrer Forschungsergebnisse haben der Datenempfänger sowie die in Ziffer 2.3 benannten Personen streng darauf zu achten, dass keine Rückschlüsse auf einzelne Personen möglich sind. Sollten Verleger/Zeitschriften die Veröffentlichung des eingereichten Aufsatzes davon abhängig machen, dass die verwendeten SOEP-Daten öffentlich zugänglich sind, ist zu beachten, dass die Weitergabe des von uns gelieferten Datensatzes grundsätzlich nicht erlaubt ist. Wir bieten daher allen Nutzern die Möglichkeit, entsprechende Datensätze im SOEP-FDZ-Archiv für Re-Analysen zu speichern.

2.9 Der Datenempfänger versichert, dass er das Einverständnis der/des unter 2.3 genannten Projektleiterin/Projektleiters eingeholt hat, welches das DIW Berlin berechtigt, sie oder ihn in der nächsten Ausgabe des SOEP newsletter namentlich und unter Angabe der Einrichtung/des Forschungsbereichs sowie des Projekttitels in der Rubrik „Neue Datennutzer/-innen" zu erwähnen.

2.10 Der Datenempfänger verpflichtet sich, Veröffentlichungen, in die SOEP-Daten eingehen, immer mit der entsprechenden Quellenangabe „SOEP" und der entsprechenden DOI zu versehen.

3 Für die Überlassung der Daten wird keine Vergütung vereinbart. Für die Datenübermittlung und die Dokumentation entstehen keine Kosten.

4 Bei Meinungsverschiedenheiten über Inhalt und Umfang des Nutzungsrechtes entscheidet das DIW Berlin.

5 Die Berechtigung der in 2.3 genannten Personen zur Nutzung der Daten endet mit ihrem Ausscheiden aus der Institution des Datenempfängers bzw. mit ihrer Auflösung, Übernahme oder Neugründung. Dies gilt ausdrücklich auch dann, wenn die Personen das Forschungsvorhaben an einer anderen Einrichtung weiterführen. Die Personen sind in diesem Fall zur weiteren Nutzung der SOEP-Daten nur auf Grundlage eines Datennutzungsvertrages zwischen der neuen Einrichtung und dem DIW-Berlin berechtigt. Auch in den genannten Situationen sind die SOEP-Daten und evtl. Sicherungskopien, Auszugsdateien und Hilfsdateien vom Datenempfänger zu löschen. Alle Änderungen im Sinne dieses Paragraphen sind dem DIW Berlin unaufgefordert mitzuteilen. Im Übrigen ist das DIW Berlin berechtigt, das Nutzungsrecht jederzeit zurückzunehmen. Auch dann sind die übermittelten SOEP-Daten durch den Datenempfänger zu löschen. Die nach diesem Absatz von den Datenempfängern vorgenommenen Löschungen sind dem DIW Berlin entsprechend Ziffer 2.6 mitzuteilen.

6 Änderungen oder Ergänzungen des Vertrages bedürfen zu ihrer Wirksamkeit der Schriftform.

Berlin, den 01.02.2023

Dr. Jan Goebel
Leiter des Forschungsdatenzentrums der
Infrastruktureinrichtung Längsschnittstudie
Sozio-oekonomisches Panel (SOEP)

Bergen, den 06.02.2023

Prof Helga Bjørnøy Urke
University of Bergen

*Appendix 7* Contract for Data-Transfer *2/2*