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Value Differences between Refugees and German Citizens: Insights from a Representative Survey

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ABSTRACT

The political debate over the inclusion of refugees frequently revolves around cultural differences, in particular differences pertaining to values, which are suspected to hamper social integration. Sociological accounts of values in principle warrant the assumption that different values promote conflict over sensitive social issues. However, only little is known about the actual values of refugees who recently arrived in many European countries. Comparative values research suggests that immigrants from culturally distant countries increase value heterogeneity. In contrast, acculturation and assimilation theories argue that values are not static constructs, but subject to change and transformation. Using data from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey, a representative panel of refugees in Germany, and from the World Values Survey, the present study investigates differences in liberal democratic and gender equality values between refugees and German citizens. Results indicate that refugees from almost all countries investigated show higher levels of agreement to these values, except secularism, than Germans.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2013, increasing numbers of refugees, predominantly from the Middle East and Northern Africa, have stirred ongoing debate over immigration and integration policies in the European Union. With about 1.4 million applications for asylum between 2013 and 2016, Germany admitted the largest share of these applications in the European Union (UNHCR, 2018). The term 'refugee' in this debate is typically used as an umbrella term for 'people who have been displaced from other parts of the world and are fleeing from violence, war and terror' (BAMF, 2020) and who have filed an asylum application.[1.] Since many applicants will stay in the European Union – Germany, for example, having formally recognized 62 per cent of applicants in 2016 (BAMF, 2017) – developing tangible integration policies is a pressing matter. Such policies are critical for refugees and host societies alike, as is evident in widespread resentment towards immigrants and the rise of right-wing protest and voter turnout (Müller-Hilmer & Gagné, 2018).

A key issue in present debates over immigration and integration policies concerns the ideal of *shared values* between refugees and native populations (Banulescu-Bogdan & Benton, 2017). In particular, immigration from major origin countries perceived and labelled as 'culturally distant', such as Syria (accounting for 36.9% of applications in 2016), Afghanistan (17.6%) or Iraq (13.3%)

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(BAMF, 2017), is suspected to increase diversity of a population's value orientations which, in turn, is supposed to undermine the values deemed at the heart of a host society (Banulescu-Bogdan & Benton, 2017). Many politicians and public commentators alike therefore demand that refugees and immigrants learn about and embrace these values and that these values remain widely recognized in society (ZEIT, 2018; Spiegel, 2018).

These debates can be misleading in at least two respects: First, they are largely void of empirical evidence regarding actual differences in the value orientations of refugees and the domestic population and regarding the consequences these differences might entail for immigrant inclusion. Instead, increasing cultural diversity – which allegedly includes diversity of values – is blamed, in particular by the political right, for the corrosion of the democratic polity, the subversion of gender equality and the decline of the principles of the liberal state (Luce, 2017; Murray, 2017). Second, these debates often underestimate within-country heterogeneity of values. From a cross-nationally comparative perspective, countries do indeed differ regarding their aggregate scores of certain values measures, for example in the World Values Survey. But this cannot be taken as evidence for an undisputed and well-defined set of values to which refugees could adhere to in the first place.

This is not to say, however, that these debates have no backing in sociological thought. Value consensus theory in the tradition of Comte (1839) and Parsons (1968) holds that concurrence in values is an essential precondition for social cohesion and lack thereof poses a danger to the social order (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). More recently, owing to this increasing interest in the role of values for social cohesion (Schiefer & van der Noll, 2017, p. 590), the integration and acculturation literatures alike started to recognize the role of values. Strang and Ager (2010), for example, explicitly recognize the impact of shared values in their conceptual framework of integration. Several others have further discussed the role of values in relation to social capital, communal bonds, or political participation and other areas of societal integration (see Silver & Dowley, 2000; Laurence & Vaisse, 2006). Likewise, the consolidation of personal and public values is increasingly acknowledged as key factor for individual-level acculturation processes (Schwartz *et al*., 2010) and well-being (Bobowik *et al*., 2011).

The lack of evidence regarding how values between refugees arriving in Germany since 2013 and the German population actually differ poses an obstacle to assessing societal challenges and tailoring policies of integration and immigration. In the following, unless defined otherwise with regard to our specific sample, we refer to all people who are in Germany under some sort of legal protection in Germany (recognized asylum claim, refugee status, subsidiary protection, exceptional leave to remain or ongoing refugee status determination procedure) and will thus stay in Germany in middle- or long-run as 'refugees'. Drawing on unique data from a large-scale prospective panel study on refugees in Germany and data from the World Values Survey, the present study therefore investigates whether the adherence to liberal democratic, secular and gender equality values, differs between refugees who have recently arrived in Germany and a representative sample of the German population. Controlling for a range of factors known to affect value orientations, such as gender, age, education, income and religious orientation, we rule out that potential differences in value orientations are due to these factors, making it more likely that differences can be attributed to (unobserved) cultural differences, nationality, country of origin, or specific refugee experiences. In the following, we first review existing theory and evidence on the cultural consequences of immigration, cross-cultural differences in values, and the role of values for social integration. We then describe the data and methods we used, report results from a series of logistic and Poisson regressions, and discuss our findings.

CULTURE, VALUES AND IMMIGRATION

Concerns regarding the deterioration of important values as a consequence of immigration and increasing cultural diversity often rest on the assumption that actors are 'carriers' of culture, i.e.

that individuals learn and internalize culture-specific values, norms, beliefs, desires and worldviews as well as various (embodied) practices associated with these cognitions (also referred to as 'personal culture', see Lizardo, 2017, for an extensive discussion). Transnational migration in this view is often seen as a process by which individuals 'carry' personal culture (including one's value orientations) from one society to another, much in the sense of a '*cultural baggage*' (e.g. Faist, 1998, p. 239). Although the idea of 'cultural baggage' is analytically flawed since it treats transnational migration as a unidirectional process and cultural differences as static, the insinuation that personal culture can be an impediment in unfamiliar social and cultural contexts persists. In line with this view, debates on immigration and immigrant inclusion often capitalize on values as decisive – and potentially conflict-laden – elements of personal culture.

Values are typically understood as evaluative beliefs, synthesizing affective and cognitive elements, that help an individual to 'orient' within a social environment by providing general ideas of what is desirable and undesirable (Marini, 2000, p. 2828). Kluckhohn (1951) prominently defined a value as 'a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable, which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action' (p. 395). Today, the sociology of values still more or less subscribes to this notion of values. Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) have suggested five characteristics of values that are common to most of the existing definitions: 'According to the literature, values are (a) concepts or beliefs, (b) about desirable end states or behaviours, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events and (e) are ordered by relative importance' (p. 551; see also Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004, p. 362). Importantly, values are widely held to inform social action and behaviour, although this capacity of values is a matter of ongoing debate (Vaisey, 2009).

Given these understandings, values can be structurally conflicting, for example when they posit opposing desirable end states or when they are prioritized differently across groups and individuals (Grube *et al*., 1994; Wuthnow, 2008). Values can also be in conflict with each other regarding the desirable actions they proscribe, as can be seen, for example, in the literature on moral dilemmas (see Ohbuchi *et al*., 1999 for a detailed discussion). Hence, in a nutshell, existing research suggests that (a) values are not only a collective phenomenon but also part of personal culture, that (b) transnational migration can indeed lead to increasing diversity in values and that (c) diversity in values can be a source of conflict in terms of assessing what's good and desirable and in terms of collectively adequate and desirable actions. This understanding would thus back concerns that circumscribe differences in values between individuals or groups of individuals as obstacles to integration on an individual and social level.

Cultural differences in values

Before discussing the theoretical conjecture that value diversity in the wake of transnational migration might pose a challenge to immigrant inclusion and social cohesion, it is worthwhile to reflect upon the types of values that are relevant in these debates and to account for previous research on differences in value orientations between countries amongst which transnational migration frequently occurs. Aside from more obvious cultural differences such as language, religion, or ways of dress and talk, cross-cultural research has provided ample insights into differences in values across societies. This literature, however, is vast and relatively disparate with regard to empirical approaches, which is why we focus on those value dimensions whose importance for social cohesion is suggested by cross-national comparative research. This includes, first, liberal democratic values as expressions of an individual's conception of and satisfaction with a democratic political order. Agreement to consensual democratic ideals is described as an indicator of the stability of a democracy, dissent as a predictor for social conflict (Inglehart, 2000, p. 225). Second, it includes secularism as opposed to religious values. Related to liberal democratic values, secular values bolster a view of society as governed by civic instead of religious institutions (Norris & Inglehart, 2004). Third, it includes gender equality values which are

frequently seen as promoters of successful economic integration of women and as a pillar of constitutional individual rights, whereas lacking gender equality will exclude women from the economic and public realms of society (Röder & Mühlau, 2014; Diehl *et al*., 2009).

Broadly speaking, research on these values is organized along two strategies through which value differences and the mechanisms that bring about these differences are assessed empirically: societies' socio-economic developmental trajectories and persistent cultural differences between so-called 'Western' and 'non-Western' societies. The term 'Western' societies in this research typically refer to capitalist, industrialized societies with a Christian heritage, whereas 'non-Western' societies usually encompass predominantly Muslim, Asian and post-communist societies.

The first approach typically relies on historical comparison of data from the *World Values Survey* (WVS), indicating that trajectories of socio-economic development rather than cultural cleavages are key driving forces of diverging value systems (Welzel, 2013). Processes of modernization, in particular the spread of secularism and sexual liberalism, as well as democratization in industrialized countries are widely held responsible for bringing about these different trajectories (Norris & Inglehart, 2004; Inglehart & Welzel, 2009). These findings, however, have remained incomplete since they neither account for diverging trajectories of change in countries with similar socio-economic development, nor for the different degrees to which values change over time. While Ulbricht (2018) recently concluded that support for democratic modes of government is as widespread in democratic societies as it is in authoritarian political systems, Inglehart and Baker (2000) find that religious values and traditions are enduring, despite similar political and economic developments. Investigating the influence of religion on liberal values, Alexander and Welzel (2011) sparked debate when suggesting that Muslim support for patriarchal values is robust across time as well as geographic areas, hence questioning that historical change alone is sufficient to explain the observed differences.

The second line of research capitalizes on this view and aims at investigating the persistence of cultural differences despite notable socio-economic change, often focusing on the question 'where Muslims and Westerners differ' (Alexander & Welzel, 2011, p. 249) and whether these differences are relatively stable despite social and economic change (Konty & Dunham, 1997; Norris & Inglehart, 2012). Comparative studies in this tradition consistently report significant differences, for instance, in conceptions of the role of women and gender equality between Western and predominantly Muslim societies (Hofstede, 2001; Alexander & Welzel, 2011; Norris & Inglehart, 2012; Tausch, 2016). Likewise, notable differences in religious values and levels of religiosity between predominantly Muslim societies and increasingly secular Western publics appear to persist across time (Norris & Inglehart, 2004).

Taken together, the comparative values literature lend support to the conjecture that immigrants and refugees from predominantly Muslim and economically less developed countries, differ notably in liberal democratic, secular and gender equality values compared to population averages in Western industrialized countries. Importantly, these studies typically aggregate individual-level measures to country averages, having little interest in controlling for individual-level predictors of value orientations, rather focusing on national level correlations (which typically cannot be extended to the individual level). They thus also tend to underestimate *individual* differences and value heterogeneity within countries (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). Such a focus on individual differences in values, however, is imperative for the analysis of immigrants' and refugees' value orientations, who can be expected to differ notably in their value orientations from the average of their respective countries of origin, for example due to self-selection and acculturation processes.

Acculturation and cultural adaptation

Complementing comparative studies' focus on rather long-term historical change, the sociology of migration has attenuated comparative studies' shortcomings by capitalizing on short-term changes

and the adaptation of values. In particular, research on acculturation and assimilation has stressed that adaptation to dominant host country values can occur relatively timely after migrating to another country (Berry, 1997; Alba & Nee, 2003). From this perspective, values and value differences are not considered static and monolithic, but rather phenomena that are subject to change and transformation, possibly as early as the beginning of the migratory process (e.g. Lönnqvist *et al*., 2011; Williams *et al*., 2013).

This is not to say that the sociology of migration downplays the existence and importance of values and value differences for migration and immigrant inclusion. Quite on the contrary, Gordon (1964) classically argued that the more distant immigrants' values and cultures are from those of a host society, the more they bring about cultural diversity and heterogeneity. This idea has most notably been elaborated by Berry (1997) in his concept of *cultural distance* and its role in acculturation processes. He suggested that integration will take a more favourable (i.e. less conflictual and individually demanding) course when cultural 'traits' (e.g. values, norms, beliefs, practices) of immigrants and members of the host society are relatively similar, while the import of distant traits may trigger rejection and spark segregation.

Schwartz et al. (2010) argue that acculturation essentially is a 'multidimensional process consisting of the confluence amongst heritage-cultural and receiving-cultural practices, values and identifications'. Proximate cultural values hence are key determinants of reciprocal processes of integration and the accommodation of new cultural practices and worldviews by immigrants (Castles, 2003; Banulescu-Bogdan & Benton, 2017). Acculturation is suspected to be more elongate and cumbersome when differences between immigrants' and a host country's dominant values are particularly pronounced. Where integration processes fail to attenuate these differences, separation and dynamics of boundary making between host societies and immigrants are likely to ensue (Silver & Dowley, 2010; Wimmer & Soehl, 2014).

Some empirical studies that have explicitly focused on value differences between immigrants and settlement societies are worth revisiting since they focus on immigrants from countries that are considered culturally similar to those countries from which many of the refugees who have recently arrived to Europe originate. In general, these studies suggest that acculturation processes contribute to consensus in a range of value orientations, although some differences between immigrants and settlement societies tend to persist. For example, first- and second-generation Muslim immigrants in several European societies strongly support political liberty and liberal democratic ideals while repudiating values of gender equality (Pipes, 2002; Laurence & Vaisse, 2006). Adherence to patriarchal values, in turn, yielded negative outcomes for labour market participation for female immigrants (Diehl *et al*., 2009). Moreover, pronounced differences with regard to state-church relations and conceptions of secularism persist between many non-European immigrants and European host societies (Fetzer & Soper, 2005).

At the same time, studies find notable differences in cultural values between prospective migrants and their home country populations, which is mostly attributed to self-selection processes (e.g. Belot & Hatton, 2012). Docquier et al. (2020) argue that migrants' 'selection on religiosity and gender egalitarian attitudes implies that the cultural distance between migrants and host country citizens [will be] smaller than between the country populations' (p. 32). This argument may in fact hold for refugees who have recently fled to Germany, since they have been shown to be a selective group of their origin countries' population, for instance with regard to age, gender and education (BAMF, 2017). Taken together, these theoretical perspectives and empirical findings suggest that country-level differences in values most likely do not translate unambiguously to immigrant populations and that existing value differences are subject to more or less rapid processes of adaptation.

Refugees' value orientations

The studies we have reviewed so far mainly focus on immigrants very generally, whereas the literature on values and value differences regarding refugees and their European hosting countries is considerably less comprehensive, probably owing to a lack of adequate data. Certainly, some of the theoretical arguments and empirical findings might also apply to refugees, but a number of specificities call for a more cautious assessment. Conceptualizing the importance of values for integration at a theoretical level, Banulescu-Bogdan and Benton (2017, p. 1) point out that 'identifying and codifying common values' in the context of refugee integration is particularly challenging, often because there is no clear blueprint for what these common values are or should be. Specifically, regarding refugees coming from Middle Eastern and Norther African countries to Europe since 2015, Kohlbacher et al. (2017) report that the majority of refugees generally supports most democratic and gender equality values. Using the same data, however, Buber-Ennser et al. (2016) identify a considerable gap between refugees and the mainstream population as well as significant within-group differences in attitudes and value adaptations. Descriptive analysis of recent German survey data finds only marginal differences in liberal democratic values between recently arrived refugees and the native German population (Baier & Böhm, 2018).

Taken together, it remains largely unknown how refugees who have come to Europe mostly from Middle Eastern and Northern African countries in recent years compare to European host country populations in terms of values. Existing cross-cultural research supports the assumption of pronounced differences in values, whereas theories of acculturation and initial evidence on these refugees suggest that these differences are much less pronounced than commonly assumed. The present study therefore provides a detailed analysis of differences in liberal democratic, secular and gender equality values by combining data from a representative survey amongst refugees who have arrived in Germany since 2013 and a representative sample of the German population.

METHODS

Data and sample

Data for the present study stem from two sources, the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees (Socio-Economic Panel, 2019), a recently established prospective panel study of refugees who arrived and filed an asylum application in Germany between January 2013 and January 2016, and the sixth wave of the German World Values Survey (WVS) which is based on a representative sample of the German population (Inglehart *et al*., 2014). The IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey is a joint initiative by the Institute for Employment Research (IAB), the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) and the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) and carried out by the independent research institute KANTAR Public Social Research. Respondents are sampled to represent refugees who arrived in Germany between January 2013 and January 2016 (Brücker *et al*., 2016). The survey includes respondents from a range of national backgrounds and different legal statuses, that is individuals with a recognized refugee or asylum claim as well as asylum applicants who are still waiting for a decision, but also those protected under subsidiary or humanitarian protection laws (including resettled individuals) and individuals whose initial application for asylum has been rejected, but who may stay in Germany with an exceptional leave to remain (Duldung). Despite this diversity, we refer to all our respondents as "refugees" to underline the uniting feature that all those individuals have fled to Germany for protection.

In our analyses, we focus on respondents from the five origin countries with the highest number of applications in Germany for the relevant time (2013–2016): Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iraq, Pakistan

and Syria (see BAMF, 2017). Additionally, we included Iran and the Russian Federation as countries with a sufficient number of respondents (threshold set at more than 50 individuals per country). The IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey includes a total of 3,879 respondents from these seven countries. We excluded 1,122 respondents with systematically missing data on our outcome variables form the sample because it is unclear whether questions were not understood or intentionally skipped to not answer in a socially undesirable fashion (Groves & Couper, 1998). Data missing at random was imputed through multivariate imputation using chained equations and the R package MICE. The final sample from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey thus included 2,757 respondents. From the WVS, we only included respondents with German citizenship who are not first-generation migrants ($N = 1{,}710$). The final pooled data set thus contained 4,467 cases.

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents comes from Syria, followed by Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea. The mean age is 34, country means ranging from 28 to 37 years (compared to 50 years for the German WVS). Except for respondents from Eritrea and Iran, the majority of each country group identifies as Muslim. Additionally, for all countries but Iran, there are notably more male than female respondents. With regard to respondents' legal status, the majority of Syrian and Eritrean respondents holds a refugee or asylum status in Germany, while for all other countries, the majority is awaiting a decision on their application. Few have received subsidiary or humanitarian protection and some have an exceptional leave to remain protecting them from deportation.

TABLE 1

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Country of Origin	N	Age (∅)	Gender (%)	Religious Affiliation (%)	Legal Status (%)
Syria	1,710	35	Male: 66.3 Female: 33.7	Christian: 5.9 Muslim: 84.2 None: 7.1 Other: 2.8	Refugee Status/ Asylum: 70.5 Resettled/ Humanitarian: 7.0 Pending: 21.4 Rejected/ Tolerance: 1.1
Iraq	425	34	Male: 65.9 Female: 34.1	Christian: 9.2 Muslim: 51.3 None: 7.1 Other: 32.4	Refugee Status/ Asylum: 40.2 Resettled/ Humanitarian: 5.6 Pending: 51.6 Rejected/ Tolerance: 2.6
Afghanistan	338	32	Male: 66.6 Female: 33.4	Christian: 7.7 Muslim: 82.2 None: 8.3 Other: 1.8	Refugee Status/ Asylum: 30.8 Resettled/ Humanitarian: 3.5 Pending: 58.0 Rejected/ Tolerance: 7.7
Eritrea	120	28	Male: 66.7 Female: 33.3	Christian: 89.2 Muslim: 10.8 None: 0.0 Other: 0.0	Refugee Status/ Asylum: 69.2 Resettled/ Humanitarian: 2.5 Pending: 25.8 Rejected/ Tolerance: 2.5
Pakistan	56	33	Male: 89.3 Female: 10.7	Christian: 1.8 Muslim: 96.4 None: 1.8 Other: 0.0	Refugee Status/ Asylum: 12.5 Resettled/ Humanitarian: 3.6 Pending: 71.4 Rejected/ Tolerance: 12.5
Iran	56	34	Male: 50.0 Female: 50.0	Christian: 62.5 Muslim: 25.0 None: 10.7 Other: 1.8	Refugee Status/ Asylum: 37.5 Resettled/ Humanitarian: 7.1 Pending: 51.8 Rejected/ Tolerance: 3.6
Russian Fed.	52	37	Male: 55.8 Female: 44.2	Christian: 9.6 Muslim: 82.7 None: 5.8 Other: 1.9	Refugee Status/ Asylum: 11.5 Resettled/ Humanitarian: 5.8 Pending: 73.1 Rejected/ Tolerance: 9.6

Measures

Outcome Variables

Our main outcome measures are eleven items assessing value orientations (see Table A1) that are included in both the WVS and the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey, the former of which in fact served as a model for the inclusion of items into the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey. The wording of all items is identical in both surveys, except for one item (WomEdu) that was excluded from the analysis (see *Preliminary Analyses*). All items have been validated in previous studies (Maseland & van Hoorn, 2009) and encompass the three major domains of value orientations we emphasized in our literature review: liberal democratic, secular and gender equality values.

Questions assessing liberal democratic values have originally been developed by Welzel (2013: p. 310, 'Liberalness in Notions of Democracy') and tap the desire for a democratic system and how essential respondents deem select characteristics of a democratic system. Although these items have been criticized for measuring attitudes rather than values (see Ulbricht, 2018), they remain the gold standard in comparative values research, probably due to their accounting for rather unambiguous concepts like free elections, equality, and civil rights which are widely referred to as 'shared semantic core' of democracy (Dahl, 1971 in Welzel & Kirsch, 2017, p. 4).

Values of gender equality are assessed by questions pertaining to a Western liberal understanding of gender equality and women's rights, specifically with regard to labour market participation (Welzel, 2013: p. 67; Alexander & Welzel, 2011). Although these items exclusively focus on occupational equality, they nevertheless capture an important marker of integration for both, immigrants and receiving societies. In the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey, these items are also measured in terms of agreement on a scale from 1 to 10. In the WVS, however, respondents only indicate 'agree', 'disagree', or 'neither'.

Predictor variables

Our main predictor variable is respondents' nationality, as assessed in both the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey and the WVS. We control for a range of variables known to be associated with individual's value orientations in previous studies (see e.g. Norris & Inglehart, 2012; Wimmer & Soehl, 2014). This includes educational attainment, measured by an index following the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) ranging from 1 (no formal education) to 5 (tertiary education) (UNESCO, 2012). We also control for respondents' self-identified religious orientation, whether they see themselves as atheists, Muslims, Christians or as belonging to another denomination (unfortunately, no variable pertaining to active religious practice was included in the survey). Moreover, we control for respondents' gender, age, family status (single, married, divorced, widowed) and socio-economic status in country of origin (self-assessed relative income, ranging from 1 ('strongly below average') to 5 ('strongly above average'). Age, education and economic status were centred on group means. We did not control for legal status in the models because, this would have introduced collinearity with the country of origin, especially Germany.

Preliminary analyses

A common challenge in cross-cultural (values) research is establishing measurement invariance of manifest and latent constructs, as in our case for liberal democratic values and gender equality values (Steinmetz *et al*., 2009; Ulbricht, 2018). We used multi-group confirmatory factor analysis (MGCFA) (Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998) to test for configural, metric and scalar invariance of these constructs.[2.] Since we are primarily concerned with scores on the manifest scales, establishing

TABLE 2

MEASUREMENT INVARIANCE

	Df	BIC	Chi	Chi diff.	Pr (<Chi)	CFI	RMSEA	CFI-delta	RMSEA-delta
Configural Invar.	160	706.7	−2655.5			0.920	0.060	NA	NA
Metric Invar.	195	480.2	−2876.7	72.94	0.0001767***	0.911	0.058	0.009	0.003

Note: Sig. codes: '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 " 1.

metric invariance is sufficient for our purposes, indicating that the factor loadings are equivalent across countries (Steinmetz *et al*., 2009; Wimmer & Soehl, 2014).

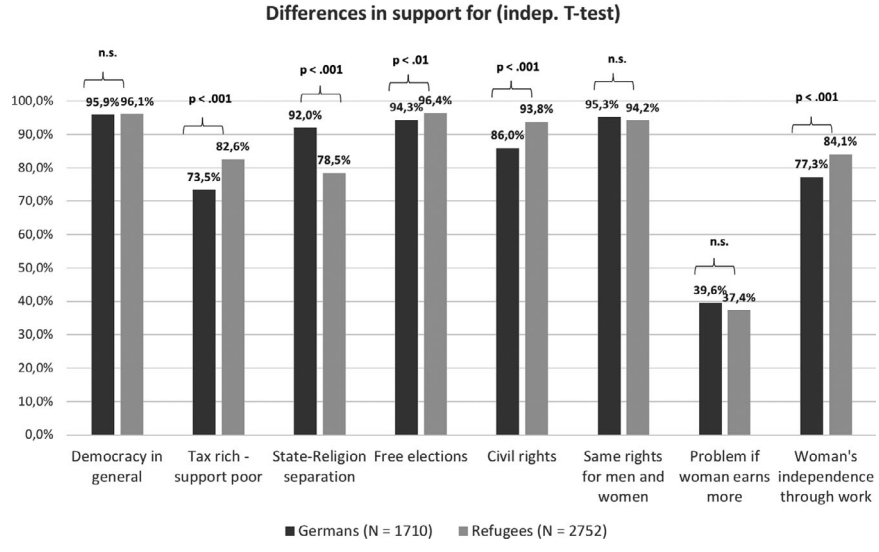
The MGCFA suggested exclusion of three items (Gov1, Gov2, WomEdu; see Table A1), amongst them the only item whose wording was not identical in both surveys (WomEdu). Table 2 shows fit indices for the final models (see Hu & Bentler, 1999). The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is considered acceptable at values >0.90 and the RMSEA is deemed acceptable at values <0.08. For the Bayes information criterion (BIC), a lower value indicates a better model fit. These fit indices suggest that the metric invariance model shows a better fit to the pooled data than the configural invariance model.

Descriptive analysis

For statistical analyses, we dichotomized responses (*agree/ disagree)* in line with practice in other studies that combined the WVS with specific refugee surveys (Buber-Ennser *et al*., 2016; Kohlbacher *et al*., 2017), also the IAB-BAMF-SOEP data (Brücker *et al*., 2016). This eliminates bias induced by the different measurement scales and resulting answers (Borgers, *et al*., 2004). Figure 1

FIGURE 1

DIFFERENCES IN SUPPORT FOR LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC AND GENDER EQUALITY VALUES BETWEEN GERMAN CITIZENS AND REFUGEES. P-VALUES REFER TO INDEPENDENT SAMPLES *T*-TESTS



shows descriptive statistics for agreement to liberal democratic and gender equality values on a single item level, comparing the share of respondents agreeing to each statement in per cent of German citizens and refugees.

These preliminary analyses show only marginal difference in liberal values between refugees and the German population. In four cases, refugees show significantly more support for liberal values than Germans. More specifically, the same share of refugees and German respondents agrees that there should be a democratic system in place. We also find no differences in agreement to the statement that men and women should have the same rights and that a job is the best way for women to be independent. Meanwhile, the idea to tax the rich in order to support the poor finds significantly more support amongst refugees than Germans. Furthermore, results show that more refugees than Germans seem to support free elections. Likewise, the idea that the individual is protected by civil rights yields higher support amongst refugees than amongst Germans. The statement that religious leaders should ultimately determine the interpretation of laws finds significantly more support from refugees compared to Germans. Finally, about the same share of Germans and refugees would agree to the idea that women earning more than their husbands would cause problems, while significantly more refugees think that having a job is the best way for women to be independent. Taken together, refugees show less agreement to liberal values only in the religious domain.

Multivariate analyses

To gain more precise insights into differences in values between refugees and the native population and to account for a range of control variables, we estimated a number of regression models. Following the results of an exploratory factor analysis, we grouped the eight items remained after the measurement invariance tests along three latent factors from which we built indices. First, we built a five-item index assessing agreement to liberal democratic values (see Appendix). The individual scores for this index range from 0 (agreement to none of the items) to 5 (agreement to all of the items). Second, the item 'religious leaders should interpret national law', which in all other studies using these items is part of the liberal democratic values battery, loaded on a single factor, which is why we analyse responses to this item (hereafter referred to as *secularism*) separately.

Third, as in other studies, the factor analysis assigned the item 'Women have the same rights as men' (see Appendix) to the liberal democratic dimension (see also Welzel, 2013). Thus, the gender equality index represents respondents' agreement to both remaining items (WomEco, WomJob), with 1 indicating agreement to both items, and 0 indicating agreement to one or zero items. The final liberal democratic values index thus includes the items Gov3, Dem1, Dem3, Dem4 and Dem5; secularism is measured with the single item Dem2; and the gender equality index is built from the two items WomEco and WomJob (see Appendix).

Liberal democratic values

We computed two (quasi-)Poisson regressions to estimate differences in support for liberal democratic values between the German population and refugees (see Appendix for advantages of a quasi-Poisson model). Individual scores indicate the number of items each respondent agrees to, a count variable. Model 1 in Table 3 shows the estimates of respondents' agreement to liberal democratic values by countries. In comparison to the reference group (Germany), respondents from Eritrea, Iraq and Syria show higher levels of agreement to liberal democratic values, whereas Pakistanis show less agreement. Afghans, Iranians and Russians show no significant differences compared to German respondents.

Model 2 includes a range of control variables known to be associated to value orientations. Once these variables are accounted for, only the country effects of Eritreans, Iraqis and Syrians remain

significant. More specifically, and accounting for all controls, Eritreans are expected to agree to 7.9% more items (Exp(β) = 1.079), Syrians to 7.3% (Exp(β) = 1.073) and Iraqis to 3.1% more items (Exp(β) = 1.031) than respondents from the German sample. Looking at the control variables, we find a strong positive effect of educational attainment on liberal democratic values. A one score increase in educational attainment is associated with a 1.2% increase in agreeing to democratic values items (Exp(β) = 1.012). Moreover, and accounting for all control variables, income plays a negative role for agreement to liberal democratic values. With increasing income, respondents are less likely to agree to these values (Exp(β) = 0.993). Given that income and education tend to be positively correlated, effects of social class and stratification are therefore driven by education rather than by income, which is probably due to liberal educational curricula. Married respondents are estimated to display a 3% increase in agreement to the democratic items compared to non-married respondents, ceteris paribus (Exp(β) = 1.030). We find no significant effects for religious affiliation, sex and age.

Gender equality

To investigate how refugees from different countries of origin and German respondents perceive gender equality with regard to participation in the labour market, we estimated two logistic regression models. In a first step, models 3 and 4 in Table 3 regress respondents' agreement with values of gender equality on their country of origin and on a number of control variables known to be associated with values orientations. To facilitate the interpretation of this model, and in particular of the country-of-origin effects, we also computed average marginal effects Average Marginal Effects (AME)[3.] (see Figure 2). Model 3 only includes respondents' countries of origin. Results indicate that refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Syria show a significantly higher probability of agreeing with gender equality values than the German respondents, whereas respondents from Pakistan show a lower probability. We find no significant differences for refugees from Eritrea and the Russian Federation.

Adding socio-demographic control variables in Model 4, only the effect sizes for Pakistan and the Russian Federation become insignificant, while respondents from all other countries of origin show a significantly higher probability of agreement to gender equality values than the German population. More specifically, the chance of agreeing to gender equality values is 173% (OR = 2.730) higher for Afghan respondents, 145% (OR = 2.455) for Iranians, 103% (OR = 2.034) for Iraqis, 80% (OR = 1.807) for Syrians and 75% (OR = 1.751) for Eritreans compared to the German population. Looking at the control variables, we find that educational attainment is positively linked to gender equality. A one unit increase in the educational level increases the chance of agreeing to gender equality by 13.8% (OR = 1.138). Married respondents are also more likely to agree with gender equality values (OR = 1.541). In addition, respondents who self-identify as Muslim are significantly less likely to agree with gender equality values than those without a religious affiliation (OR = 0.574). Finally, males are less likely to agree with gender equality values than female respondents (OR = 0.822).

It is interesting to note that when controlling for socio-demographic factors such as age, gender and education, the country-of-origin effects increase notably. To more precisely account for these country factors, we computed Average Marginal Effects. These effects reflect the likelihood of agreement with gender equality values depending on the country of origin, holding all other variables constant. Figure 2 shows AME with a 95% confidence interval. Keeping all other variables constant, being from Afghanistan increases the chances to agree with gender equality values, compared to a respondent with identical characteristics from the German reference group, by 23.7%. For individuals from Iran, chances increase significantly by 21.3%, by 17% for Iraq, 14.2% for Syria and 13.4% for Eritrea, respectively. Effects for Pakistan and Russia remain insignificant.

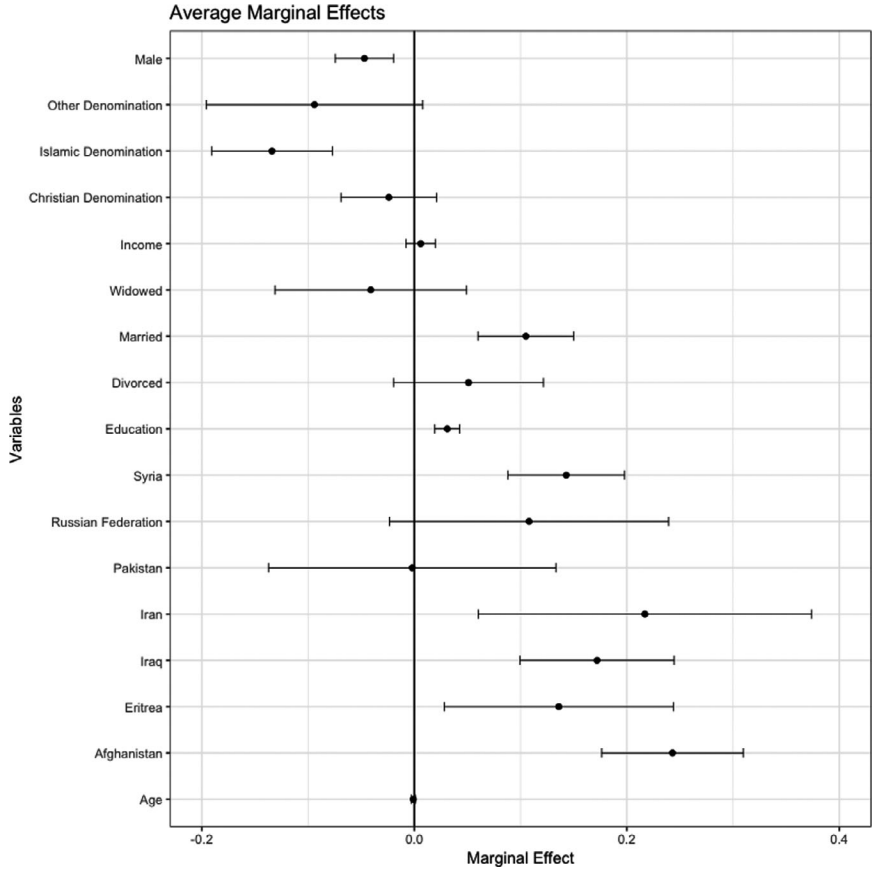
TABLE 3

REGRESSION RESULTS

Variable	Liberal Democratic Values (quasi-Poisson)				Gender Equality Values (logistic)				Secular Values (logistic)			
	Model (1) B (p-value)	Exp (β)	Model (2) B (p-value)	Exp (β)	Model (3) B (p-value)	OR	Model (4) B (p-value)	OR	Model (5) B (p-value)	OR	Model (6) B (p-value)	OR
Country (Germany)												
Afghanistan	−0.018	0.982	−0.006	0.994	0.556***	1.744	1.004***	2.730	−1.575***	0.207	−0.999***	0.368
Eritrea	0.070***	1.073	0.076***	1.079	0.343	1.410	0.560**	1.751	−1.560***	0.210	−1.517***	0.219
Iraq	0.030**	1.030	0.030*	1.031	0.335**	1.397	0.710***	2.034	−1.058***	0.347	−0.445*	0.641
Iran	−0.004	0.996	−0.002	0.998	0.773**	2.167	0.898**	2.445	−0.833*	0.435	−0.651	0.521
Pakistan	−0.070**	0.933	−0.048	0.954	−0.642*	0.526	−0.007	0.993	−1.999***	0.135	−1.402***	0.246
Russian Fed.	0.011	1.011	0.019	1.020	0.108	1.114	0.446	1.561	−1.216***	0.296	−0.652	0.521
Syria	0.059***	1.060	0.070***	1.073	0.161*	1.174	0.592***	1.807	−0.970***	0.379	−0.375*	0.687
Age			−0.0004	1.000			−0.003	0.997			0.013**	1.014
Education			0.012***	1.012			0.130***	1.138			0.189***	1.208
Sex (male)			0.004	1.004			−0.196**	0.822			0.027	1.028
Income			−0.007*	0.993			0.027	1.027			0.026	1.026
Family (single)												
Divorced			0.025	1.025			0.213	1.237			−0.262	0.769
Married			0.030***	1.030			0.433***	1.541			−0.001	0.999
Widowed			0.029	1.029			−0.168	0.845			−0.665*	0.514
Religion (none)												
Christian			0.006	1.006			−0.099	0.906			−0.065	0.937
Islamic			−0.012	0.989			−0.555***	0.574			−0.809***	0.445
Other			0.025	1.026			−0.387*	0.679			−0.890***	0.410
Constant	1.493***	4.450	1.465***	4.328	−0.108*	0.897	−.230*	0.795	2.420***	11.250	2.576***	13.145
N	4,345		4,345		4,345		4,345		4,345		4,345	
AIC					5,998.745		5,917.043		3,706.266		3,648.202	

Note: Second column of each model reports exponentials or odds ratios; Sig. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1.

FIGURE 2
AVERAGE MARGINAL EFFECTS FOR GENDER EQUALITY VALUES



Secularism

The logistic regression used to analyse differences in secular values between German citizens and refugees from various countries of origin follows the same logic as the gender equality models. Models 5 and 6 regress support for secularism first only on the country of origin variable also on a range of control variables. Results for model 5 indicate that respondents from all countries of origin have a significantly lower probability to agree with secular values, most significant amongst Afghans and Pakistanis, compared to German respondents.

In Model 6, the effect sizes for Russian Federation and Iran become insignificant, while respondents from all other countries of origin still show a significantly lower probability of agreement to secular values than German respondents. Thus, controlling for all other variables known to affect value orientations, the chance of a German supporting secularism is 356.6% (OR = 0.219) higher compared to Eritreans, 306.5% (OR = 0.246) compared to Pakistanis, 171.7% (OR = 0.368) compared to Afghans, 56% compared to Iraqis (OR = 0.641) and 45.6% compared to Syrians (OR = 0.687).[4.] Looking specifically at our control variables, educational attainment again is significantly positively related to secularism, as a one unit increase of educational attainment increases the

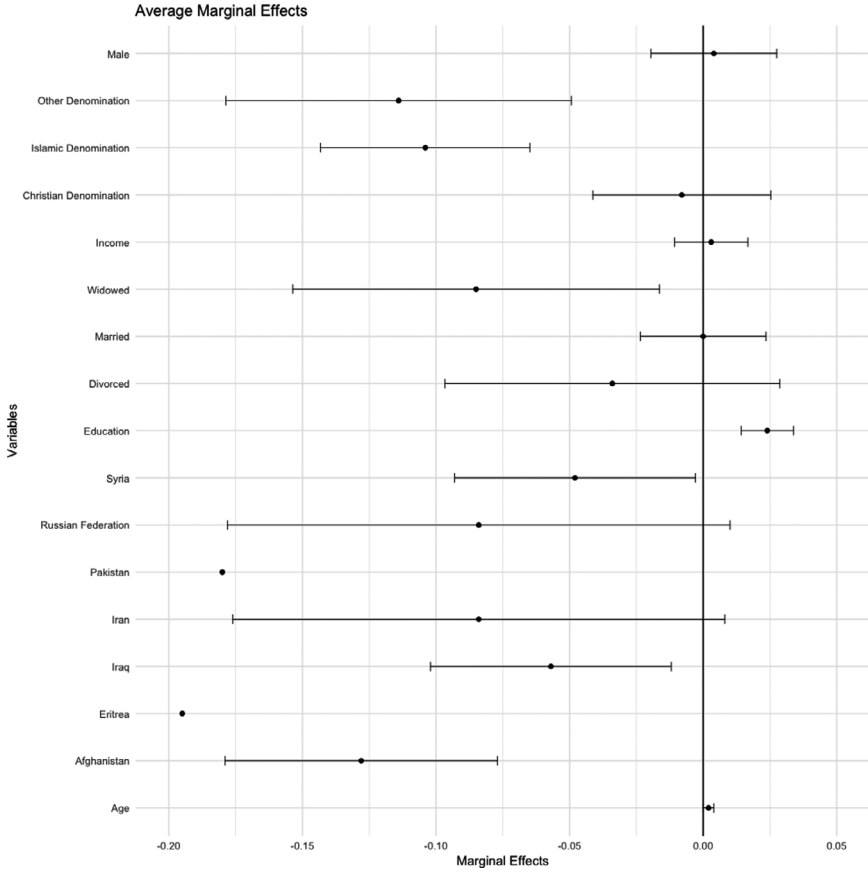
chance of agreeing by 20.8% (OR = 1.208). Older respondents are found to more frequently support secularism than younger respondents (OR = 1.014). Widowed respondents are less likely to support than to not support secularism (OR = 0.514). An Islamic religious orientation was found to be significantly negatively related to secularism (OR = 0.445), while no significant effect was found for adherence to Christian denomination.

We also calculated AME for secularism (see Figure 3). All other variables held constant, being from Eritrea decreases the odds of agreeing with secular values by 24.5% compared to an identical respondent from the reference category Germany. For individuals from Pakistan, the chances decrease by 22.5%, by 14.1% for Afghanistan, 5.2% for Iraq and 4.3% for Syria. We find no significant effects for respondents from Russia and Iran.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study addressed the question of how refugees who have arrived in Germany since 2013 differ from the native German population with regard to liberal democratic, secular and

FIGURE 3
AVERAGE MARGINAL EFFECTS FOR SECULARISM



gender equality values. Cross-cultural studies would suggest notable differences in values between these groups, which in turn might promote conflict and constitute barriers to social integration and immigrant inclusion. On the other hand, acculturation and assimilation theories and research recognizing the particularities of immigrants and refugees, for instance in terms of self-selection, would suggest less pronounced differences between these groups and, hence, less potential for conflict.

Our results speak in favour of the latter account, since we in many cases find stronger support for liberal democratic and gender equality values amongst refugees compared to the German population. Regarding liberal democratic values, refugees from Eritrea and Syria show a significantly higher frequency of support than German respondents, and only refugees from Pakistan show lower probabilities of agreement. Importantly, our findings at the same time support previous research on *individual* differences in value orientations. Our results show that education is one of the strongest predictors of liberal democratic value orientations and that income in itself is negatively associated with these values. Because education and income tend to be positively correlated, they to some extent cancel each other out in their effect on liberal democratic values. We also find significant effects of family status, indicating that married respondents tend to hold more liberal values than non-married individuals. This is a well-documented finding which Wimmer and Soehl (2014) explain with young singles often conforming less to mainstream values and seeking to deviate from modal patterns.

When it comes to gender equality values, refugees from Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq show significantly higher probabilities of agreement than Germans. These pronounced differences might be due to two facts: First, the gender equality items have a strong economic focus and relate, first and foremost, to women's labour market participation, which might be particularly desirable for refugees in terms of generating income (Rubin *et al*., 2008; Diehl *et al*., 2009; Röder & Mühlau, 2014). Given that previous research established that gender equality matters differently in distinct spheres of social life, for example regarding labour market participation and family life (Kostenko *et al*., 2016), our results do not account for gender equality per se. They rather point out that gender equality matters to refugees in terms of the labour market. Second, considering the relatively low agreement to gender equality values amongst Germans, concerns may be directed not towards refugees' high support, but rather towards unsatisfactory support of gender equality by German respondents (Dearing, 2016).

We cannot rule out that responses to all three value domains, at least partly, are due to social desirability effects (Schwartz *et al*., 1997), also because the federal migration office BAMF is directly involved in the survey. These are difficult to address since no items for measuring social desirability were included in the survey. Social desirability is particularly relevant for values research since both are closely related to morality and perceptions of desirability (Fisher & Katz, 2000). Furthermore, it seems reasonable to assume that respondents' tendency to present favourable images of themselves in questionnaires (Fisher, 1993; Johnson & Fendrich, 2002) is particularly evident for refugees in the asylum process who face considerable social pressure and an insecure legal status. While these hypothetical effects could not be empirically tested in our study, four lines of argument speak for the validity of our findings. First, in our sample, Syrian and Eritrean respondents have the most secure legal status, whereas respondents from Pakistan and the Russian Federation have the least secure status (see Table 1). Consequently, respondents from Syria and Eritrea should face less pressure for social conformity than Russian and Pakistani respondents and may thus respond in a less desired fashion. However, our results rather indicate the contrary – Syrian respondents report comparably high levels of agreement to our values items, while Pakistani respondents show some of the lowest agreement rates. These findings speak against a systematic influence of legal status on response behaviour. Second, previous studies on democratic values have shown that the items indeed capture knowledge of and adherence to the 'semantic core' of democratic values (Welzel & Kirsch, 2017, p. 4). Agreement to these items can therefore be interpreted at least as cognitive understanding of and the willingness to adhere to democratic principles (Miller *et al*., 1997). It seems plausible that people fleeing indiscriminate violence and human rights abuses

are sensitized to democratic rule and the rule of law, considering that persecution and the inability to seek protection from the own government is the main reason for seeking refuge (UNHCR, 1951, Art. 1(2)). Third, agreement to Western liberal democratic values could at the same time be interpreted as a disaffirmation of illiberal and undemocratic values that persist in many countries of origin. Finally, the involvement of a commercial survey research company which safeguards respondents' privacy, might contribute to alleviating respondents' concerns that their response behaviour could lead to some form of asylum-related repercussions on the side of the BAMF.

Contrary to liberal democratic values and gender equality values, agreement to secularism is significantly lower amongst refugees. The finding that refugees tend to support democratic and non-secular values at the same time, however, is unlikely to invalidate our findings regarding democratic values per se. Rather, they need to be analysed in light of varying degrees of democratic literacy. Individuals from different cultural backgrounds, with different experiences with democracy also have different definitions of what the constitutive features of democracy are (Kostenko *et al*., 2016). A primary objective of integration policies thus should be to increase knowledge about the German democratic systems and foster democratic over non-secular values.

Our findings can further inform policy debates on integration and refugee inclusion in three respects. First, they suggest that concerns over refugees' value orientations undermining the principles of the liberal democratic state are likely to be exaggerated. In contrast, policymakers are likely to find fertile ground for civic engagement and political participation amongst refugees and should make efforts to include refugees into the political process as soon as (legally) possible, emphasizing cultural commonalities rather than differences. Second, the study suggests that refugees' gender equality values are likely to promote women's participation in the labour market. Policymakers might thus consider labour market participation as a fruitful avenue for integration, especially for women, and thus take measures to facilitate (female) refugees' access to the labour market. Third, when crafting integration measures, policymakers should account for refugees' countries of origin since we find notable differences in value orientations across counties of origin.

Future research should examine how refugees' values relate to those of the population in their countries of origin to further contextualize the findings at hand. A body of literature that addresses migrants' non-representativeness for their respective countries of origin suggests that self-selection processes amongst prospective migrants account for the fact that, in terms of values, migrants are often closer to their society of destination than to that of origin (Belot & Hatton, 2012). In this sense, it has been argued that migrants 'selection on religiosity and gender egalitarian attitudes implies that the cultural distance between migrants and host country citizens [will be] smaller than between the country populations' (Docquier *et al*., 2020). Another question is how the values of refugees will adjust over time, as an effect of living in German society. Assimilation theory suggests that due to acculturation processes, immigrants gradually move closer to their countries of residence (Röder & Mühlau, 2014). It could be interesting to observe these processes under consideration of legal status and subsequent changes in social desirability effects that may influence refugees more than other groups of migrants.

Taken together, our study provides insights into the values and personal culture of refugees who came to Germany since 2013. Although we cannot entirely rule out social desirability effects, the present findings suggest that there is much less potential for conflict and that there are considerably fewer cultural barriers to integration than is commonly assumed.

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PEER REVIEW

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NOTES

1. Unless indicated otherwise, we use the term according to this meaning in what follows.
2. We used R packages Lavaan, semTools and semPlot for the analyses.
3. AMEs were chosen because – better than marginal effects with means (MEM) – they consider the full distribution of X rather than generalized predictions thereof.
4. Note: If Odds Ratio < 1 the change in % is expressed by: [(1/OR) −1]*100, because $OR_{control/\ reference} = 1/OR_{reference/\ control}$.

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APPENDIX

TABLE A1

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Items	Statements	Response category	Germans	Refugees	t-test
Gov1	'You need a strong leader who does not have to be concerned with a Parliament or elections'.	Agree Non-Agree	19.6 80.4	26.5 73.5	$p < 0.001$
Gov2	'Experts, not the Government, should decide what is best for the country'.	Agree Non-Agree	40.6 59.4	71.6 28.4	$p < 0.001$
Gov3	'There should be a democratic system'.	Agree Non-Agree	95.9 4.1	96.1 3.9	n.s.
Dem1	'The government taxes the rich and supports the poor'.	Agree Non-Agree	73.5 26.5	82.6 17.4	$p < 0.001$
Dem2	'Religious leaders ultimately determine the interpretation of laws'.	Agree Non-Agree	8.0 92.0	21.5 78.5	$p < 0.001$
Dem3	'The people choose their government in free elections'.	Agree Non-Agree	94.3 5.7	96.4 3.6	$p < 0.01$
Dem4	'Civil rights protect the people from government oppression'.	Agree Non-Agree	86.0 14.0	93.8 6.2	$p < 0.001$
Dem5	'Women have the same rights as men'.	Agree Non-Agree	95.3 4.7	94.2 5.8	n.s.
WomEco	'If a woman earns more money than her partner, this inevitably leads to problems'.	Agree Non-Agree	39.6 60.4	37.4 62.6	n.s.
WomEdu	'For parents, vocational training or higher education for their sons should be more important than vocational training or higher education for their daughters'.	Agree Non-Agree	11.2 88.8	21.3 78.7	$p < 0.001$
WomJob	'Having a job is the best way for a woman to be independent'.	Agree Non-Agree	77.3 22.7	84.1 15.9	$p < 0.001$

Note: Sig. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 " 1

Descriptive statistics

All values items that are included in the IAB–BAMF–SOEP and the WVS, including those that were eliminated after measurement invariance analysis, and the respective support rates for each item.

Index construction

The items Gov1, Gov2 and WomEdu did not pass our tests of Measurement Invariance and were thus excluded from analysis. A factor analysis grouped the remaining eight items to three latent factors. These factors were used to build the three following indices from the dichotomized items.

Liberal Democratic Values (Individual scores range from 0 to 5, depending on the number of items a respondent agrees with.)	Gov3: There should be a democratic system. Dem1: The government taxes the rich and supports the poor. Dem3: The people choose their government in free elections. Dem4: Civil rights protect the people from government oppression. Dem5: Women have the same rights as men.
Gender Equality Values (Individual scores range from 0 to 1, depending on whether the respondent number agrees to both items or not.)	WomEco: If a woman earns more money than her partner, this inevitably leads to problems. WomJob: Having a job is the best way for a woman to be independent.
Secular Values (Individual scores range from 0 to 1, depending on agreement or non-agreement to the item.)	Dem2: Religious leaders ultimately determine the interpretation of laws.

Poisson regression vs. Quasi-poisson regression

For the count variable measuring liberal democratic values, consisting of non-negative integers ranging from 0 to 5, a Poisson regression model was chosen. The advantage is that a Poisson regression does not a) assume that the residue of the model follows a normal distribution, and b) end up, if the value of independent variable is sufficiently large or small, with a value smaller than zero, leading to an estimation of the outcome variable without practical sense. In a Poisson regression, it is assumed that the mean of the dependent variable is equal to its variance. After testing the assumption, however, we find that the observed variance is much smaller than the mean, and hence the expected variance. This leads to a problem of under-dispersion (Kokonendji, 2014, p. 506), and an overly pessimistic estimation of the standard errors, that is the estimated standard errors are larger than they 'actually' are. Thus, the effects of the predictors which are supposed to be significant are estimated to be insignificant, (see e.g. Dunteman & Ho, 2005). In order to overcome such problem, we lose the assumption and run a *quasi-Poisson* regression, in which the true effects of the predictors are accurately estimated.