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**Alike at the Core, Different at the Margins: A
Comparison of Party Preferences between
Immigrant and Native Voters at the 2017
Bundestag Election**

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IMGES

- First survey of immigrant voters in Germany in 2017 (two biggest groups, 1st and 2nd generations)
- Classic Michigan Model of Party Choice works for immigrant voters as for native voters with party identification, issue competence and candidate evaluations as central determinants
- Immigrant-specific factors explain the rise of directional attitudes necessary in the Michigan Model, but do not help within any “augmented” Michigan Model

Immigrant Voters at the 2017 Bundestag Election

The two most popular members of the two most numerous immigrant groups in Germany

Mesut Özil



Helene Fischer



Sources: <http://www.helene-fischer-fans.com/start/>, <https://www.deutschland.de/de/topic/leben/mesut-oezil>

The two most numerous immigrant voter groups

	K	In %
All eligible voters	61 500	100
Voters without immigrant background (DoM)	55 200	89.8
Voters with immigrant background (1st/2nd gen)	6 300	10.2
Voters with a Turkish background (DTÜR)	730	1.2
Voters with Soviet/Post-Soviet background (DRUS)	1 950	3.2

Party-list vote: How much do voting patterns differ?



	DTÜR (IMGES)	DRUS (IMGES)	DoM (GLES)	BTW 2017
CDU/CSU	20	27	30	32.9
SPD	35	12	20	20.5
LINKE	16	21	11	9.2
GRÜNE	13	8	13	8.9
FDP	4	12	12	10.7
AfD	0	15	10	12.6
Others	12	5	4	5.2

Theoretical Framework

RQ: Electoral consequences of immigrants as voters



- Can immigrants' party preferences be explained by the standard model of electoral choice, the Michigan model, that we use in electoral studies?
- What impact do immigrant-specific factors have?

Michigan Model (Campbell et al. 1954, 1960)

- Party identification (long-term attachment), issue competence & candidate evaluation (short-term factors)
 - H1: Same direction of Michigan Model factors for immigrants and natives
 - H2: Party ID of more importance for native voters, whereas candidate evaluations and issue orientations matter more for immigrant voters than natives

Three ways how they could affect party preferences

(1) Add additional explanatory power

- » H3: The longer immigrant voters stay in the host country, the less discriminated they feel against, the less they identify with the country-of-origin, the higher propensities to vote are on average

(2) Moderate the functioning of the standard model

- » H5: Length of stay and ethnic identity amplify the positive effect of party ID, whereas discrimination decreases the positive effect of party ID

(3) **Affect the existence of political attitudes and attachments**

- » **H6: The longer the length of stay, the lower the perceived levels of discrimination, and the lower the identification with the country-of-origin, the more likely are immigrants to have developed political attitudes**

Data and Methods

- Post-election F2F study (Oct-Dec 2017) after the German federal election
- Two groups: Germans of Turkish/Post-Soviet descent of 1st and 2nd generation
- Representative survey with 500 interviews per group
 - 70 mins face-to-face survey in German (CASI in Russian/Turkish possible)
- Complex sampling process with onomastic procedure
- Comparable to the German Longitudinal Election Study (which we use for the native voter models)

Dependent variable: Propensities To Vote

- Propensities to vote: „How likely is it that you would ever vote for this party“; Stacked data for all six parties that entered parliament
- Combine GLES (natives) and IMGES (immigrants)
- Missed values substituted with MCRI procedure (Multiple Complete Random Imputation, Kroh 2006)

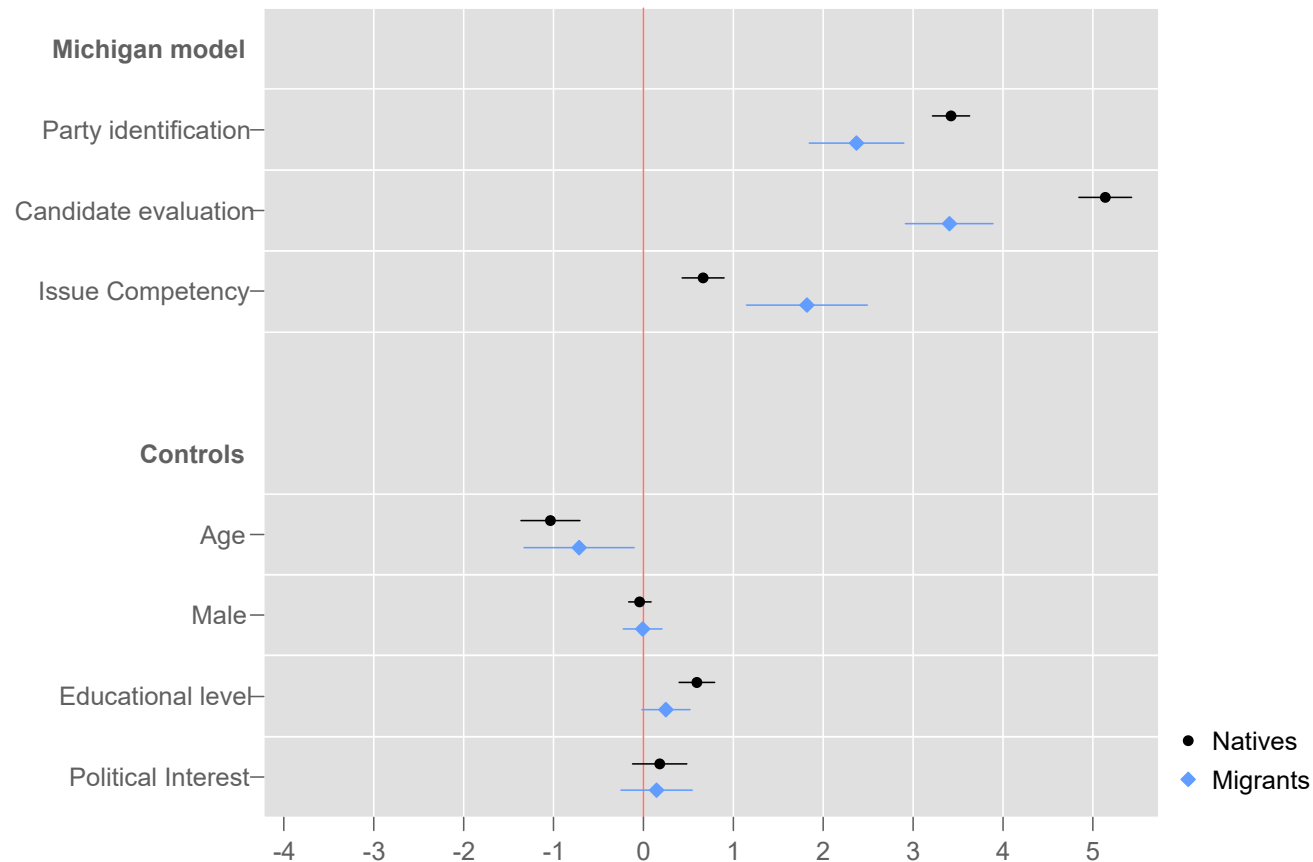
Empirical Results

Some selected statistics on missing values

- % of don't knows, no answer

	DTUR	DRUS	Natives
Party identification	8	11	3
Issue competence	11	14	8
Candidate evaluation CDU/CSU	3	5	1
...SPD	12	22	6
...Left	26	36	17

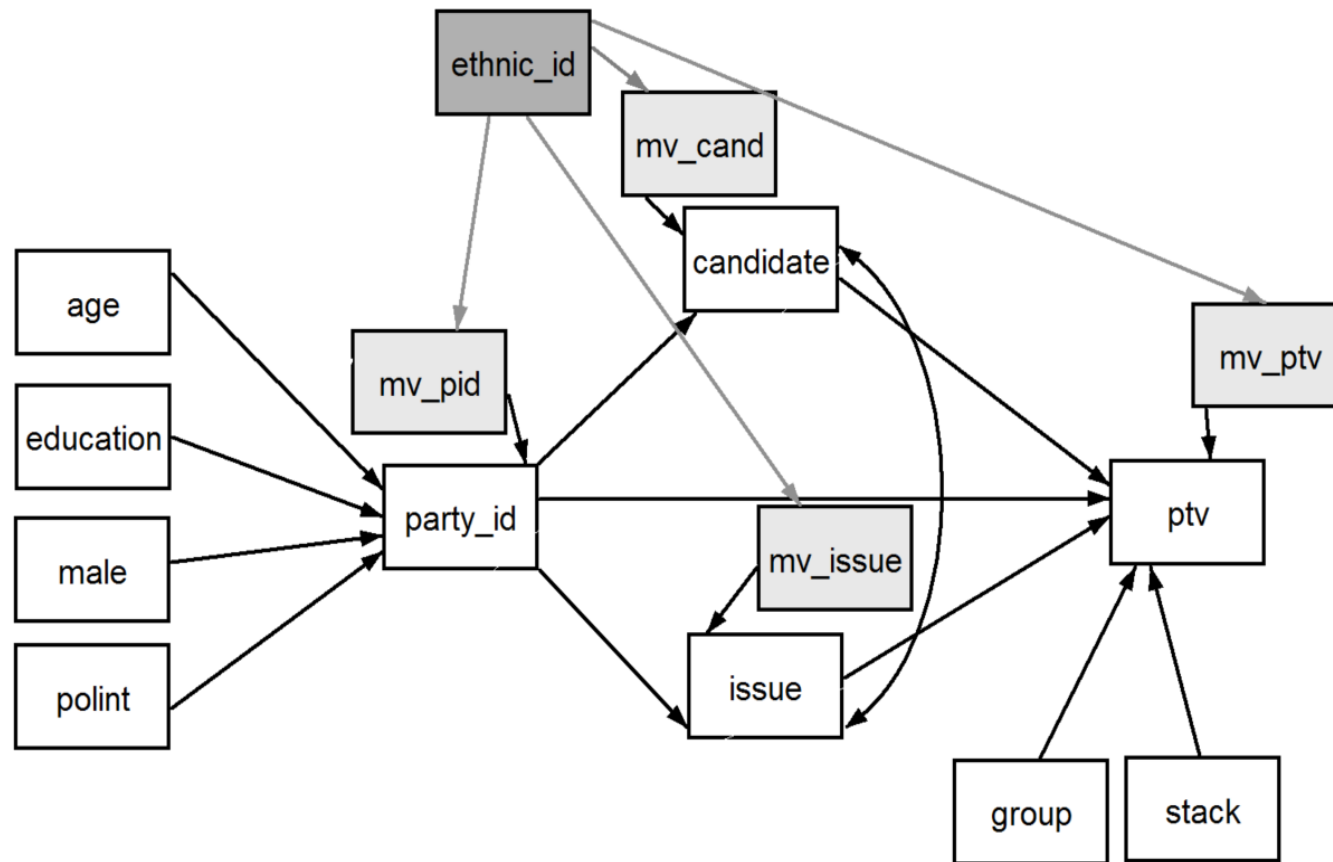
H1: Same direction of effect (confirmed)



Weighted and stacked data, robust standard errors in parentheses, all continuous independent variables recoded to range from 0 to 1

H6: Immigrant-specific factors affect existence of political attitudes and attachments

- Path model including missing value dummies



H6: Immigrant-specific factors affect existence of political attitudes and attachments

- Partly confirmed for length of stay and ethnic identity

	M4
MV Party ID (Dummy) ←	
Time Spent in Germany	-0.15***
Ethnic identity	-0.01
Discrimination index	0.00
MV Candidates (Dummy) ←	
Time Spent in Germany	-0.22***
Ethnic identity	0.02*
Discrimination index	-0.06***
MV Issues (Dummy) ←	
Time Spent in Germany	-0.24***
Ethnic identity	0.03***
Discrimination index	-0.01



- Michigan Model works
- Generational adaptation, the longer they stay the more they become similar to native voters
- Very little evidence for direct and moderating effect of immigrant-specific factors
- But: Affect existence of attitudes in the first place, analyses without missing values miss out on this

