

Based on joint paper with

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Project <https://bit.ly/imges2>

Paper & slides
<http://achimgoerres.de/work-in-progress>

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Integration and Transnational Political Interest among
Immigrant-Origin Voters:

An Analysis of Germans from Turkey and their
Children in the Immigrant German Election Study 2017

Achim Goerres

IMGES

German citizens of Turkish descent



Ilkay Gündogan

Mesut Özil



Cenk Tosun

Source: Tagesschau.de, 13 Jan 2020

German citizens of Turkish descent



Ilkay Gündogan

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Cenk Tosun

What is the impact of integration into German society on transnational political interest, i.e. pol. Interest in DE and in TR, among Germans of Turkish origin?

Source: Tagesschau.de, 13 Jan 2020

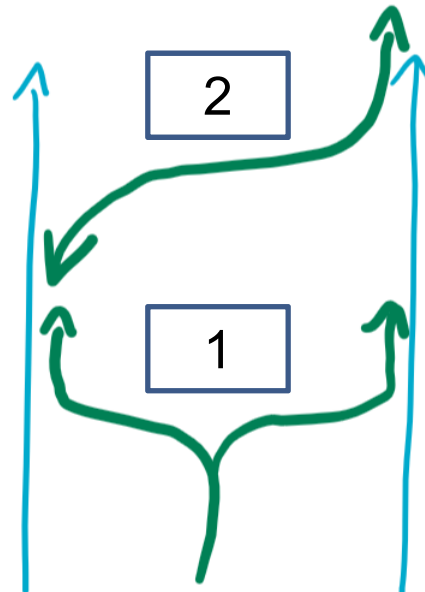
Why are we conducting this study?

- Political engagement in territorial politics in a world where **information** are **globally accessible at negligible costs**
- **Contested social recognition** of the political integration of immigrant-origin citizens here and there
- **Strategic importance of diaspora** for political actors in sending country
- **Rise in expatriate voting rights** and easier access to multiple citizenships
- **10 % of German voters of immigrant origin in 2017, ~12 % in 2021**, Turkish community biggest immigrant-origin community in Germany

In a nutshell: Integration has a two-step influence

2. Integration **tilts** in favour of interest in German politics along the lines of the assimilationist expectation

Interest in TR
Politics



Interest in DE
Politics



1. Integration **activates** general political interest

along the lines of cosmopolitan democratic theory, political behaviour and transnationalism research

1. Theoretical Framework & Hypotheses
2. Data & Variables
3. Regression Results & Stylised Interpretation
4. Conclusions

1. Theoretical Framework & Hypotheses

Transnational political interest

- Not interest in international politics, i.e. the politics between states
- Interest in politics across borders
 - Interest in politics or processes that are genuinely transnational (e.g. refugee policies)
 - Interest in supranational politics (e.g. EU politics)
 - **Interest in national politics in at least two polities**
- Not typical only of immigrant-origin individuals

- Classic model of political participation **resources and motivation at the centre**
- **More integration** means **more resources and motivation** to engage in politics
- Agnostic about where political actions takes place

- Promise of a **new kind of democracy**
- Immigrant-origin voters the new “**super citizens**” who can find a position in transnational social and political space
- Immigrant-origin citizens access to several political processes; **fluid and heterogeneous constellations** of transnational political behaviour
- **But: only small group** of transnationally active individuals

Assimilation Research

- The **less social cohesion** an immigrant group, **the less** its social and political behavioural patterns **distinguishable from the majority population**
- After a few generations, descendants of minority groups socially and politically **not recognisable anymore**
- The more integrated, the stronger focus on host-country politics

Hypotheses

| | Mean political interest | Net political interest |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Economic integration | + | + or 0 |
| Social integration | + | + or 0 |
| Cultural integration | + | + or 0 |
| Perceived discrimination | - | - or 0 |

2. Data & Variables

Data: Immigrant German Election Study (IMGES)

- 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
- Germans of Turkish descent 16 or older

Historical context 2017

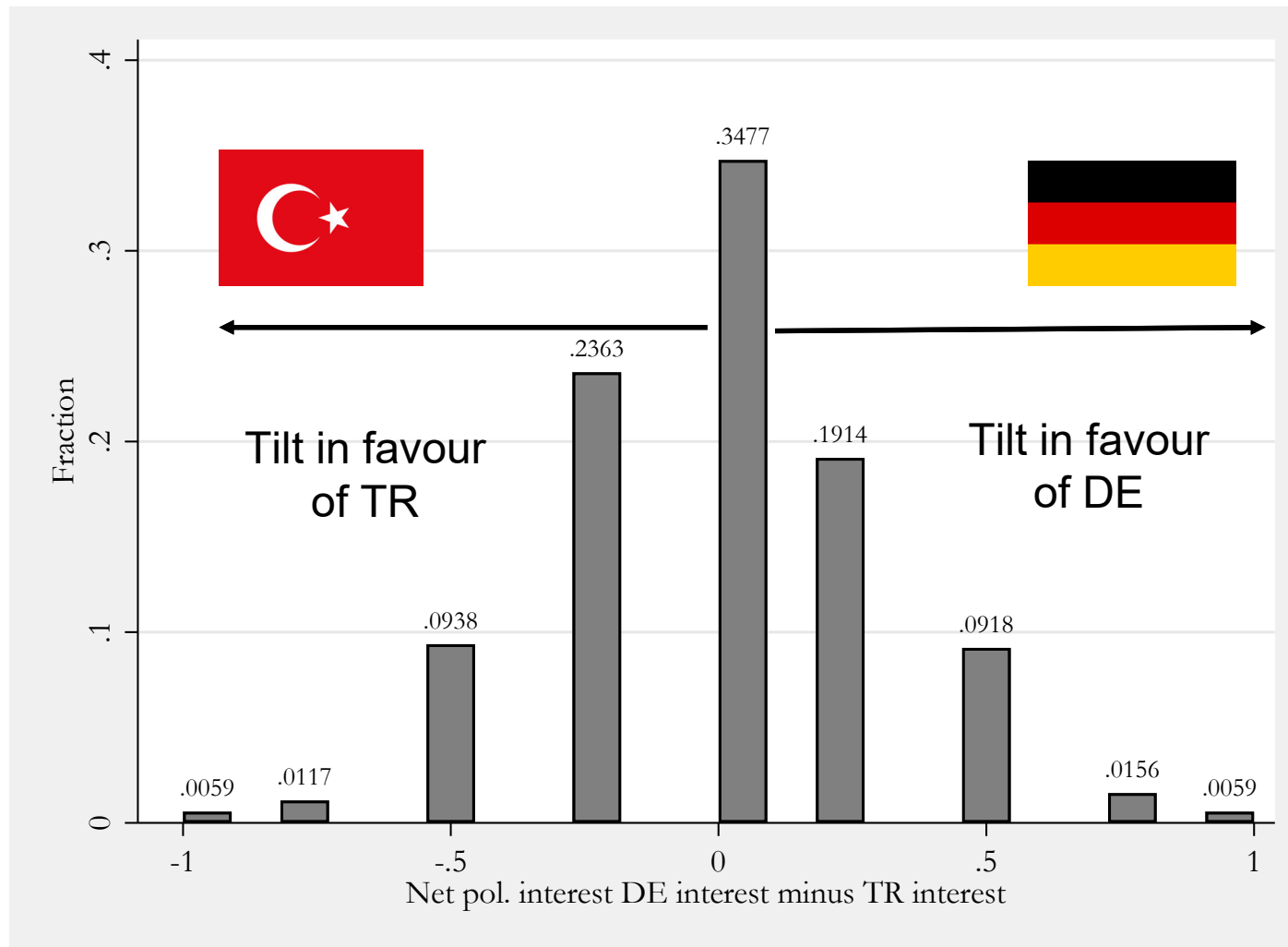
- Right-populist party AfD projected to enter Bundestag
- Immigration and large intake of refugees were high on the political agenda
- High turnout of 76.2 % (+ 4.7 % over 2013)
- Mobilization of Turkish citizens in Germany during Turkish constitutional referendum by TR authorities in April 2017
- Intervention by Erdogan in the German Bundestag campaign
- Party close to AKP campaigning *Allianz Deutscher Demokraten*

Interest in German and Turkish Politics

| | | in TR Politics | | | | | Total |
|-------------------|------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| | | 0 | 0.25 | 0.5 | 0.75 | 1 | |
| in DE Politics | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| | 0.25 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 15 |
| | 0.5 | 3 | 8 | 15 | 9 | 5 | 41 |
| | 0.75 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 10 | 3 | 28 |
| | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 13 |
| Total | | 10 | 21 | 30 | 26 | 12 | 100 |

Pearson's Chi²-Test: $p=0,018$; Kendall's tau-b=+0.35

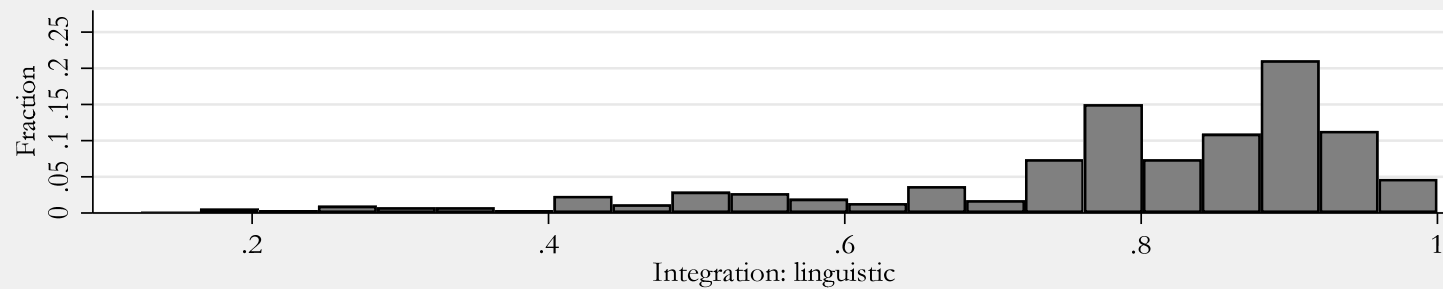
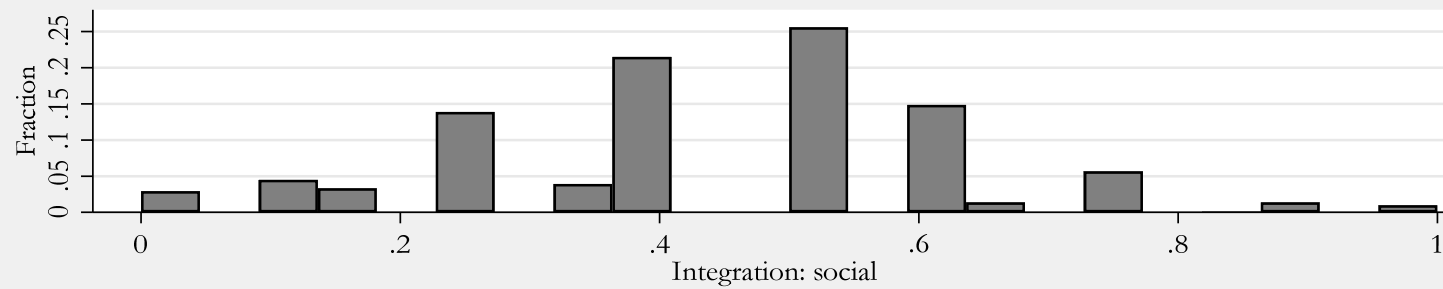
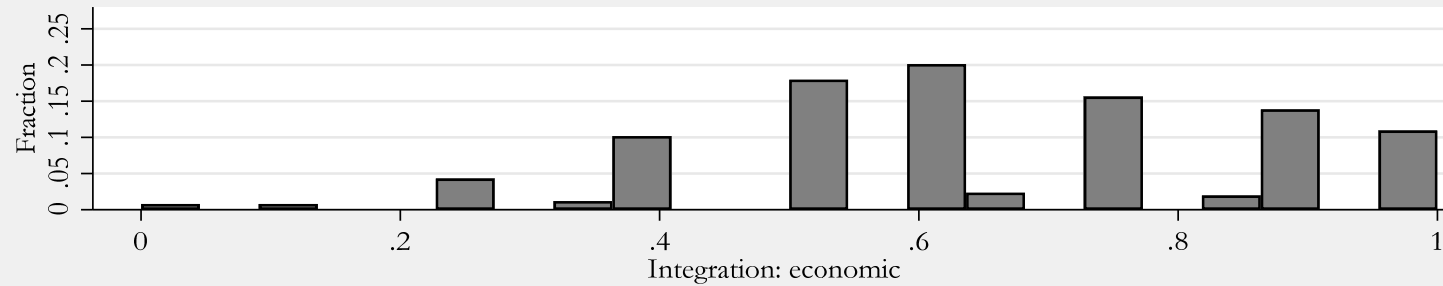
Net Political Interest



Main independent variables

- **Economic integration:** index of education, household income, employment situation, assessment of personal economic situation
- **Social integration:** index of partnership, composition of peer networks, composition of work colleagues, membership in social organisations
- **Cultural integration**
 - **Linguistic integration:** index of command of DE and usage of DE in various domains
 - **Identity:** mean level and tilt of feeling DE & feeling TR
- Reported **discriminated against** because of religion, descent or language

Distribution of main independent variables



Control variables

- Gender X Immigrant Generations (1st, 2nd generation)
- Member of minority group (Kurd, Alevi or Yazidi)
- Dual citizen
- Self-reported command of Turkish
- Contact with family in TR in three ordinal categories

- Neighbourhood composition (Microm data)
 - purchase power
 - % of neighbours of Turkish descent

3. Regression Results & Stylised Interpretation

Regression results

Estimated effects from min to max

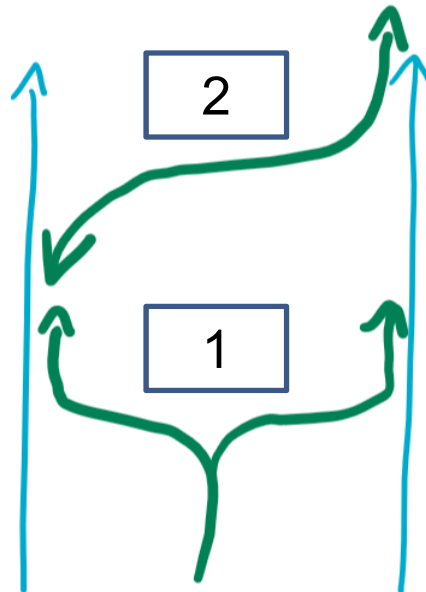
Mean pol. Interest

Net pol. Interest

| | 0 to 100 | p-value | -100 to 100 | p-value |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Econ. integration | 2 | 0.79 | 22 | 0.06 |
| Soc. integration | 27 | 0.00 | 17 | 0.10 |
| Ling. integration | 3 | 0.77 | 18 | 0.28 |
| Mean identity | -1 | 0.87 | -10 | 0.40 |
| Net identity | 2 | 0.27 | 12 | 0.01 |
| Feeling discriminated against | 5 | 0.21 | 3 | 0.52 |

Stylised interpretation of regression results

Interest in TR
Politics



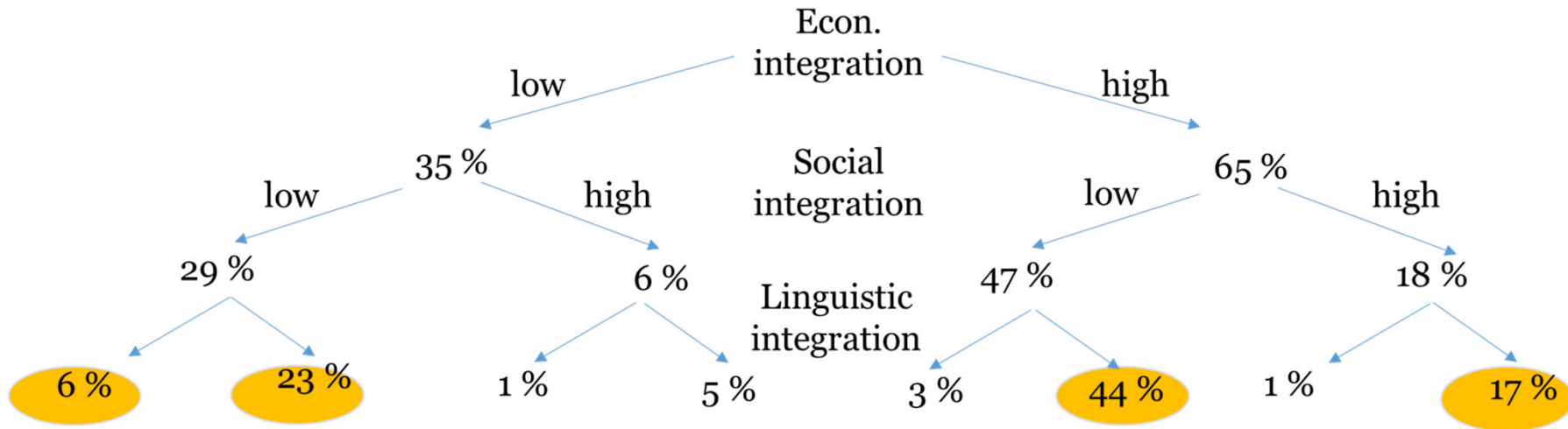
Integration **tilts**

Interest in DE
Politics



Integration **activates**

Joint distribution on main independent variables



4. Conclusions

Conclusions

- Empirically: clear picture of more integration leading both to general activation and tilt towards interest in German politics
- Theoretically: Reconciliation of assimilationists and transnationalists
- Conventional focus on nation-state in a globalised world with high level of mobilisation from country-of-origin

Thank you for listening.

[Bit.ly/imges2](https://bit.ly/imges2)