

# Citizen By Choice? The Effect of Context on Political Socialisation of Syrian Refugees in Baden-Württemberg and Brandenburg

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Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the  
degree of Master of Arts in Transnational Governance of the  
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European University Institute  
**School of Transnational Governance**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:

### **A**

Alternative for Germany  
(AfD) ..... 5

### **B**

Baden-Württemberg  
(BW) ..... 6

Brandenburg  
(BR)..... 6

### **C**

Christian Democratic Party (CDU)  
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### **E**

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### **F**

Federal Employment Agency

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### **G**

general predictive model  
(GPM) ..... 3

German Internet Panel  
(GIP) ..... 10

### **L**

Longitudinal Internet studies for the Social  
Sciences  
(LISS)..... 10

### **S**

Social Democratic Party  
SPD ..... 14

## **Abstract:**

The issue of multi-level governance in asylum policies received renewed attention following the Ukrainian refugee influx of 2022. This thesis offers a regional approach by analysing internal variations within Germany of refugee political integration policies and their effectiveness in socialising refugees. Using the Königstein key's allocation of Syrian refugees following the 2015 refugee crisis, it systematically compares integration patterns in the states of Baden-Württemberg and Brandenburg. The field of political socialisation is important for refugees fleeing authoritarian states, yet the process of socialisation is different between migrants and is highly dependent on context. Using an online survey ( $n = 584$ ), I create a general predictive model (GEM) using geographic, demographic, and political variables before controlling for location and allocation. The paper finds significant variations in political socialisation scores between the two states and between allocated and self-matched refugees, reaching an explanatory power of  $r^2 = 33\%$ . The research finds that traditional demographic variables used in political socialisation research interacts differently with refugees in different locations and situations, hence the need to consider the design of allocation policies in relation to the professional or academic opportunities for refugees. By collecting data on refugee preferences and testing the effect of allocation and reallocation on their political socialisation, the study contributes to the literature on political socialisation with methodological reflections and lays ground for further studies about refugee preferences.



# 1. Introduction:

The issue of asylum governance in Europe presents both a challenge and a litmus test for implementing the EU's liberal values. By contrast, accepting large numbers of refugees in a few European states could lead to a rise of illiberalism and a backlash against refugees. Interestingly, support for illiberal policies tend to concentrate in limited regions, which could affect the political socialisation of allocated refugees in comparison with more accepting areas. However, this raises a question whether the location (e.g., Eastern Germany) or refugee allocation (choice of location) affects the process of their political socialisation. This raises the need to study internal variations of refugee political socialisation within a state as well as between states to compare the effects of allocation policies on refugee integration.

In studying variations within a state, this research studies the effect of local context (or lack thereof) on refugee political socialisation in the German case. The effect of local context on migrant political socialisation has been difficult to study due to existing patterns in migrant choice of location (Wong und Tseng 2008). But in Germany, this choice-biased or self-selection effect can be largely controlled for by the fact that allocation of refugees was implemented through the Königstein key (*Königsteiner Schlüssel*) following the 2015 refugee crisis. Although developed as an instrument designed to determine each federal state's (*Länder*) financial contribution as a form of horizontal cooperation (Bartl 2021), the key was used for immigrant and later refugee reallocation within Germany (Geissler und Meyer 2002, 66–80). The basic formula for allocation is quotas based on the state's tax revenue (2/3) and total population (1/3). So the effect of objective characteristics of context can analysed without having to worry about the confounding factor of choice by the migrants itself, and control for cases of policy exemptions. For example, after the random allocation to the 16 states, refugees are required to remain in their allocated cities or towns unless they proved a certain level of integration (receiving a professional or educational offer or family unification, also known as self-matching).

The rise of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) following the 2015 refugee crisis in Eastern Germany shows the effect of local context on host populations but says little about the effect of refugee allocation to Eastern Germany. Thus, the objective of this paper is to provide a de-centring perspective from the state-centred use of allocation to the effect of allocation on refugee political integration and future political participation. The paper also provides insights

into refugee preferences which remains an understudied field in order to better design matching and allocation systems (Jones und Teytelboym 2017, 2018).

Early resettlement models focused on two variables only: volume of refugee intake and economic & cultural adaptation (Lanphier 1983), which advanced towards optimisation models to maximise the number of resettled refugees<sup>1</sup> (Cilali, Barker, und González 2021). Such models correlate with the aforementioned strict and liberal asylum policies, which highlights the importance of distribution models in politics. This paper studies the effects of a hybrid model (Königstein) on refugee political socialisation to inform policy makers. The main question of the paper is: to what extent does the local context affect Syrian refugees' political socialisation? The quantitative research design (surveys) investigates variations in political participation among Syrian refugees in two contrasting federal states in terms of the Königstein distribution as well as geographic, demographic, and political-preference variables. The two states are particularly suitable to investigate due to exogenous allocation of refugees to Brandenburg (BR) after most refugees arrived in three Western states in 2015 and only partial allocation in Baden-Württemberg (BW) (Bundestag 2015). To study the effect of quasi-randomness of refugee allocation, I control for both location (federal state) and exemptions to the allocation (similar to self-matching) by obtaining educational, professional, or family purposes to leave the allocated place. To ensure the representation of the sample, I use a stratified sampling strategy based on Nora Ragab's mapping of the demographics of Syrian refugees in Germany in 2017 which is the starting point for this research (Ragab und Rahmeier 2017).

The operationalisation of the dependent variable (political socialisation) uses four questions related to political perception (importance, relevance) and political activity (conventional, unconventional). After testing for internal coherence, independent variable multicollinearity, and creating a General Predictive Model (GPM – model 1) for the Syrian refugee population in Germany, I compare the GPM with two predictive models that control two aspects of location: one that controls for location (model 2) and one that separates the data of refugees that were allocated and those who moved afterwards to test the Königstein (model 3). The original data also allows to process the development of the refugee group in relation to family unification, especially following the end of the two-year suspension in 2018 (Feindt 2018).

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<sup>1</sup> For a history of refugee resettlement schemes, see Teytelboym's *Refugee Resettlement* (2016).

The thesis found significant variations in political socialisation scores between the two states and between allocated vs self-matched refugees. Remarkably, most independent variable showed consistent performance in the three models, highlighting the overwhelming effect of both local context and choice (allocation vs self-matching) in the political socialisation of refugees. For example, geographic variables such as Königstein allocation (choice of living location based on professional, education, or family ties) seemed to significantly matter in BW and have little explanation power in BR. This is likely related to the effect of allocation since most refugees in BR were allocated from Western States while BW includes a mix of allocated and matched refugees. Second, the strongest explanatory demographic variables such as education level and German language level showed inconsistent results between the two states and between allocated and matched refugees, highlighting the role of location in influencing political socialisation variables. The only exception in the demographic variable group was an unexpected steady result for the correlation between “marriage” and a decrease in political activity. This is likely related to cultural expectations of married couples. Finally, we found that the effect of political party preference is strongest when geographic and demographic variables are omitted. In conclusion, we found more consistent results when controlling for allocation vs matching which answers the initial question of the study: location matters, but choice matters more in political socialisation.

This paper contributes with original data to research on allocation and matching of refugees in relation to the political context of two regions which can be used to study other dependent variables. The lack of data on refugee preferences creates a significant limitation to research on applying matching theory to refugee allocation and matching (Jones und Teytelboym 2017). The research design lays ground for a future nation-wide study to analyse the effects of allocation on refugees to design a better asylum framework. The methodological approach aimed at showing the varying (and sometimes contradicting) results associated with types of variables or tests used, and hence the importance of future qualitative research through semi-structured interviews to understand the relationship between integration variables from the perspective of refugees. The paper ends with a discussion about policy implications of the findings.

## **2. Literature review and theory:**

The research puzzle relates to the effect of context on the political activity of refugees who were exogenously allocated (and were unable to relocate). The literature review is divided in two parts, the first begins with an overview about political socialisation of refugees, before discussing the types and agents of socialisation in the German context. Second, I discuss existing limitations in political socialisation studies that require attention to different variables when studying refugee populations, namely data availability, theoretical & methodological incoherence, as well as research design issues.

### **1. Political Socialisation of Refugees:**

Early definitions of political socialisation described it as “the development process by which citizens acquires political orientation and pattern of behaviour” (Easton 1968). The end of the Cold War highlighted the importance of non-economic cleavages such as the type of authoritarian ideology on citizens during the process of democratisation, especially in Eastern and Southern Europe (Dinas 2017). As a result, the field of political socialisation shifted focus towards “types” of socialisation (direct vs indirect) and “agents” (family, school, state, peers, and media) which raised questions about early life experience and age of obtaining political outlook (Jennings 2007; Neundorf und Smets 2017). In the Syrian context where politics are taboo at home, studying the process of political (re)education during the integration process is key in understanding the political socialisation of refugees. Thus, the Syrian “process of acquiring political orientation” as described by Easton can be viewed as a process of political re-socialisation in the German context, which is a topic of public debate in relation to integration policies.

The study of political socialisation agents in the field of refugees is centred around the role of state policies such as welfare (Ghorashi 2005), civic organisations such as ethnic organisations (Pilati und Morales 2016), as well as other migrant communities (Szulecki u. a. 2021). The comparative nature of this approach provided a golden standard to compare with, which is the political socialisation model of the majority population (de Rooij 2012). Indeed, since integration is a synonym of political socialisation that also covers social and political aspects, levels of acceptance by majority populations are also used to compare political socialisation of migrants and refugees (2012, 13).

In the German case, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees' (BAMF) leads all issues related to migration, integration, and asylum. Yet in practice, BAMF coordinates with other agencies such as the Federal Employment Agency (FEA) for labour-market integration, while federal ministries of Education and Research contribute to academic integration of refugees. According to Germany's "National Integration Plan," over 300 actors are involved in the process of integration which was simplified into five phases in 2018 (Bundesregierung 2018). Most importantly, the Meseberg Declaration on Integration outlined Germany's strategy in integration as a two-way principle of providing support & opportunities by the state in exchange for duties and effort to integrate – famously known as *Fördern und Fordern* (demand and promote) (Bundesregierung 2016). Thus, the Königstein key's exemptions of forced allocation for integrated refugees (economically or academically) seems in line with the Meseberg Declaration and describes a conditional resettlement model. This opens the door for natural experiments to study the effectiveness of the Königstein key and its effect on aspects such as political socialisation or labour-market integration.

Eline de Rooij's study on patterns of immigrant participation in Western Europe provides a thorough framework for comparing various forms of political participation in order to explore any divergence of participation between migrants and majority populations (de Rooij 2012). Most notably, she concludes that the divergence of participation patterns are less distinct than anticipated and that they be explained by variations in resources (as in the case of native citizens), but by the amount of time spent in the host country and emphasis on "unconventional acts" of political participation (2012, 466). This raises an important enquiry about political participation for refugees from authoritarian states where political is criminalised for decades. For example, it is unlikely for Syrian refugees to participate in protests due to fear of arrest or attacks, which is why they seek alternative or unconventional acts of dissent such as online campaigns or simply by discussing with local colleagues. Thus, the explanatory mechanisms for studying political participation operates differently between refugees and majority populations (2012, 469). This paper builds on de Rooij's findings in forms of political participation by not only asking whether refugees participate or not in the political process, but how, and seeks to further understand the role of demographics and integration policies in mobilisation.

The integration of Syrian refugees differs in context and policy from that of Turkish guest workers (Gericke u. a. 2018; Hindy 2022; Ricking 2017), especially in terms of market

integration (Battisti, Giesing, und Laurentsyeva 2019; Giesing, Battisti, und Laurentsyeva 2018). While refugees today are spread across Germany in accordance with the Königstein quota system, Turkish guest workers are concentrated in North-Rhine Westphalia (Chazan 2017) and form a strong voting block both in Germany and Turkey (E. Østergaard-Nielsen 2003a). Moreover, comparisons of minority political activity exists mostly in Western Europe such as Algerians in France (Giry 2006), Turks and Kurds in Germany and the Netherlands (E. Østergaard-Nielsen 2003b; Sevi u. a. 2020), and inter-state comparisons of minority populations (Ersanilli und Koopmans 2009, 2011). Interestingly, there is little consensus about the effect of migrants on voting behaviour of host communities in Europe (Grumstrup u. a. 2021).

Moreover, patterns of ethnic minority participation are well-researched especially considering the Turkish-German diaspora (E. K. Østergaard-Nielsen 2001). Other approaches focused on incentives or apathy of migrant political participation in relation to the state's foreign policy, especially when a migrant group was perceived as politically excluded (Diehl und Blohm 2001). Currently, Syrian refugees present a new minority that will both shape the political attitudes of local Germans (Mader und Schoen 2019) as well as other migrant groups in Germany (Gurer 2019).

## **2. Methodological limitations:**

The nature of political socialisation research is critiqued from the early days by Dennis' who claimed that further exogenous variables such as generation, cross-cultural variations, socialisation agents, and extent of socialisation should be considered (Dennis 1968). Later, researchers began to integrate newer technologies and methods to study the topic. The overview below presents methodological and data limitations to the study of refugee political socialisation.

“Spatial socialisation” became a new lens (replacing links to culture) to view political behaviour in relation to context (Kallio 2014) especially on the city/town level (Neis, Meier, und Furukawazono 2018). Early empirical research emphasised the importance of location in the process of socialisation, yet highlighted the limitations of the field caused by design, data availability, and methodological concerns related to the study of the field (Neundorf und Smets 2017, 14). Fortunately, new internet-based panels shed light on elementary variables such as

political preference, most notably the Longitudinal Internet studies for the Social Sciences (LISS) in the Netherlands and the German Internet Panel (GIP). The following quote summarises the limitation:

“Not designed by political scientists, the indicators available in these data sets are limited to just a few political variables: often only partisanship and political interest. It is both important and interesting to investigate attitude stability for other more policy-oriented preferences as well. Such preferences are, however, usually only included in election panel studies that span just a few years.” (2017, 14).

Second, the issue of poor methodological design raised attention to the interaction between the variables of different socialising agents within and outside of “home” (Dinas 2014). The empirical school challenged a long-standing belief and showed that parent-child agreement in party support and identification is dependent on parental politicization and is not a rule, and emphasised different variables for different age groups which better explained transmission of political socialisation within home (Wolak 2009). Even though refugees are often excluded as a study group in the field of political socialisation, research attempted to test whether similar variables that are used in democracies can be generalised to emerging democracies (Finkel 2002) as well as the political socialisation of post-communist and post-authoritarian states (Neundorf 2010). This practical awakening led to the expansion of the field to focus on new variables that were often unquestioned or tested, such as the effect of “impressionable years,” and how the same events can affect the socialisation of different social or ethnic groups differently (Ghitza, Gelman, und Auerbach 2022).

Most importantly, the use of the Königstein Key to allocate refugees within Germany and similar allocation schemes received academic and policy attention in measuring the effects of exogenous allocation on various fields of enquiry. Initially, the quota system was designed to determine each federal state’s (*Länder*) financial contribution as a form of horizontal cooperation (Bartl 2021) but was used for immigrant and later refugee reallocation within Germany. The basic formula for allocation is quotas based on the state’s tax revenue (2/3) and total population (1/3). The key has proven its effectiveness and stability in six migration waves to (West) Germany between the Second World War and the end of the century (Geissler und Meyer 2002, 66–80), and was tested again during the European refugee crisis of 2015.

In practice, initial distribution by BAMF uses a system known as the EASY system (*Erstverteilung der Asylbegehrenden*). The admission rates for the Länder are calculated by EASY with the help of the Königstein key, and asylum decisions must take the calculated quotas and specific country of origin rules into account. After allocation, refugees are required to remain in their allocated cities or towns unless they proved a certain level of integration (discussed next section). The effect of context on migrant political socialisation has been difficult to study due to the pattern of migrant choice of location (Wong und Tseng 2008). Yet, the rise of allocation systems of refugees (see Teytelboym & Smith) addresses the selection bias by exogenously allocating refugees to their places of residence by BAMF, and created further research into what is called “natural experiments” (Gërxhani und Kosyakova 2022) and raised attention to the importance of urban planning in refugee integration (Seethaler-Wari 2018).

Since the choice of location is independent of refugee preferences, the outcome of their socialisation process is dependent on their location irrespective of their priors, which highlights the importance of local political context, especially on adult (re)socialisation which is less related to schools and family. Thus, my focus will be on the geographic, demographic, and political variables in the socialisation process of adults (Kononova, Alhabash, und Cropp 2011).

### **3. Theory – The issue with Königstein:**

According to Sections 55(1) and 56(1) of Germany’s Asylum Act, asylum seekers have the right to remain on the territory under a “permission to stay” (*Aufenthaltsgestattung*), but this right is limited to the state or district of the foreigners’ allocated reception. Indeed, such “geographic restriction” (*räumliche Beschränkung*) makes the freedom of movement of refugees outside their allocated states dependent on a reason to be approved by BAMF. It is to note that federal states can (and do) negotiate exceptions for all asylum seekers or specific groups based on citizenship or legal status (Section 58(6)). For example, preferential treatment for Syrian refugees during the 2015 refugee wave and Ukrainian refugees in 2022 provide grounds for discrimination based on citizenship. However, refugees can still challenge the Königstein allocation and request reallocation if they were offered a job or educational opportunity in another state (Section 58(2)). Further exceptions are in place for cases of family unification and situations where refusal of the application would constitute “undue hardship.”



The problem with mandatory allocation is that federal states would like to distribute refugees across Germany's 16 states in accordance with the Königstein formula, while refugees prefer to have the choice of living location (freedom of movement) to pursue personal or professional goals. Consequently, federal states use incentives to promote their interest which might not correlate with that of refugees, and the reward for "invisibility during integration" is the national freedom of movement after passing a litmus test for integration (obtaining a professional or educational offer). This means three things: refugees are more accepted in small concentrations than large ones, allocation can be temporary and conditional, but state interests do not always correlate with those of asylum seekers. The issue of secondary movement raises questions about first, the effectiveness of the Königstein system to allocate refugees if secondary movement is common (65% according to our sample). Second, it raises questions about the effects of such reallocation on the political socialisation of refugees. Third, since different states have different political compositions (and strongholds), how much do local politics play a role in the process of refugee political socialisation?

#### **4. Research design and methodology:**

The mixed-method research design aims to investigate the variation in political participation among Syrian refugees in two contrasting federal states (Länder) in terms of the Königstein distribution as well as socio-economic variables. The two states are particularly suitable to investigate these questions due to exogenous allocation of refugees to Brandenburg (BR) after most refugees arrived in three western states in 2015 (Bundestag 2015) and the partial allocation in Baden-Württemberg (BW). To ensure the quasi-randomness of refugee allocation, I control for both change of location and external factors of political socialisation through questions in the survey.

After data collection through an online questionnaire, a database is created after translating the trilingual responses to English, removing personal information that can identify participants, and coding the answers into variable groups (geographic, demographic, and political)<sup>2</sup>. The null hypothesis is that there is no relation between local context (following allocation) and political activity for refugees. Hence, the testing process has 3 steps: first, creating a latent dependent variable (DV) using questions about various types of political participation and testing it for

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<sup>2</sup> See the coding sheet for further information about the coding process.

internal coherence. Second, weighting the variables to create a General Predictive Model (GPM) that best responds to the general sample which involves both the studied states and a control sample from other states. Third, I compare the GPM with models derived after controlling for location and allocation. The results are analysed in relation to demographic variables such as age, education, and marital status, as well as political variables that cover types of political engagement, political relevance, socialising agents, and party preferences.

#### **A. Case selection:**

Due to the limited data on political socialisation of citizens from post-authoritarian states, the focus of my research on the level of the community (Jennings 2007), treating the Syrian refugee group as a homogenous group. To ensure the representation of the sample, I use a stratified sampling strategy based on Nora Ragab's mapping of the demographics of Syrian refugees in Germany in 2017 which is the starting point for this research (Ragab und Rahmeier 2017). New data allows to process the development of the refugee group in relation to family unification, especially following the end of the two-year suspension in 2018 (Feindt 2018).

The local context of the two states is asymmetric politically, economically, and socially. Electorally, BW is a Green-party stronghold, even leading the local government's coalition as the Junior Partner with the Christian Democratic Party (CDU), while the excluded Social Democratic Party (SPD) in Baden-Württemberg has a stronghold in BR and faces one of the highest AfD bases in Germany (19%). In both states, the CDU is a junior partner in government. Financially, BW is economically stronger than Brandenburg in terms of GDP, GRP, and GRP per capita. This political and economic divide is common between western and eastern states and is well-covered in literature. Finally, demographic differences show that BW is younger, more religious, hosts more foreigners and refugees than BR. Yet, the population of BR has been slowly decreasing since German reunification, while BW's population is rapidly growing. Hence, BW was able to host 13% of Syrian refugees in its large foreign population, while BR's decreasing population received only 3% of refugees (16,800) making them the second largest foreign group after Polish migrants. Table 1 details the main differences in context between the two states.

Table 1 Descriptive Context Differences of Baden and Brandenburg

<b>Local Context</b>	<b>Baden-Württemberg</b>	<b>Brandenburg</b>
<b>Political</b>	Greens (17%) & CDU (24%) government with 21% SPD support	SPD (30%), CDU (15%) & Greens (9%) government with 19% AfD support
<b>Economic (GRP)</b>	€500.790 billion (2020), 15% of German GDP, and €47,000 GDP per capita	€73,930 billion (2020), 2% of German GDP €29,500 GDP per capita
<b>Demographic</b>	11 million inhabitants (13% increase since 1990)	2,5 million inhabitants (1% decrease since 1990)
<b>Königstein Key allocation</b>	13% of the total refugee population	3% of refugees, allocated from Western states
<b>Number of Foreigners and Syrian refugees</b>	1.2 million foreigners, of which 84,300 (7%) Syrians as the sixth largest foreign group	137,640 foreigners, of which 16,800 (12%) Syrians as the second largest foreign group

## B. Data collection:

Since data on refugees is difficult in Germany due to privacy and ethical concerns, and due to the difficulty of obtaining data through BAMF, I use a combination of networks (via online groups) and expanding access (via institutional connections) to survey such a hard-to-reach population.

The trilingual questionnaire (AR/DE/EN) includes 24 questions divided into three sections: geographical information, political participation, and demographic information (See Appendix 1). For sampling, I use a stratified random sampling strategy to ensure the distribution of the sample is representative of the Syrian population in terms of demographics (age, sex, and education level). Interestingly, there was around 20% of noise in the data from Syrian refugees in other states (especially in the most populated state – North Rhine-Westphalia). Thus, I keep the noisy data in the general explanatory model and later as a control group. To reach 95% confidence interval with 5%<sup>3</sup> margin of error, the research requires at least 400 respondents in the two studied states, and extra data from other states can be used for comparison. Finally, I

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<sup>3</sup> At the time of writing, I have 240 respondents with 6.32% margin of error. The number goes to 2500 respondents for a 2% margin of error.

published the surveys in the largest Facebook groups of Syrian refugees in Germany<sup>4</sup> with a picture and an explanatory text to encourage participation.<sup>5</sup> To calculate the response rate, I use “number of views” as a base point to estimate the outreach of the survey. The final number of responses used in the study is n=584.

### C. Operationalisation:

The following section discusses the operationalisation of the dependent variable (DV), as well as the systematic cleaning process of the dataset ahead of analysis.

I start by explaining the content of the DV. Political socialisation variables (aggregated as the DV) ask questions about *perception, engagement, and preferences* of refugees. Since only *engagement* is relevant to political socialisation, I use *perception* and *preferences* as independent variables<sup>6</sup>. “Perception variables” ask surveys the perceived relevance and importance of German politics for refugees, as well as (perceived) level of engagement. Second, “engagement variables” ask about level of German language, agents of socialisation, engagement in protests, and regularity of discussing German politics with German contacts. Third, I ask about the appeal (or lack thereof) of German political parties. The section ends with an open question about other forms of practiced political activity to cover for unconventional forms of political participation (de Rooij 2012). In order to ensure the reliability of the latent variable, I use Cronbach’s alpha test after unifying the scale unit to ensure the internal reliability of the scale and test the relationship between perception, engagement, and preferences variables. Since my political socialisation is a latent variable (e.g., measuring extroversion), I use a set of questions create my dependent variable by summing the variables since the scale is unified (see the coding sheet for further information). It is to note that these are not the same independent variables related to perception of general politics but directed to the refugee. The questions are:

- *How important is German politics in your life?* (perception)
- *How engaged are you in German politics?* (perceived engagement)
- *Do you discuss German politics with your German contacts?* (social engagement)

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<sup>4</sup> The largest groups are “Syrian Diaspora in Germany” (460,000 members), Syrian Home in Germany (303,000 members), “New Syrians in Germany” (279,000 members), and Syrian Refugees in Germany (71,000 members)

<sup>5</sup> Data collection was open for two weeks between 27.03.2022 – 10.04.2022.

<sup>6</sup> The relationship between *perception* and *engagement* is tested later and has indicates that *perception* affects *engagement* only in specific locations

- *Have you ever participated in a legal demonstration since you arrived in Germany?*  
(communal engagement)

I conduct a Cronbach Alpha test with the four variables to ensure the internal reliability of the scale (now turned from 0-20 with 20 being the highest) and find the alpha score of 0.74 which ensures a good level of scale coherence.

Moreover, demographic and geographic variables are central to both sampling accuracy (considering the web survey) and analysis. For example, we know from Rageb's 2017 survey about the demographic characteristics of the refugee population at the time, but we do not know how it developed in the last five years through family unifications and advancements in studies and work opportunities. Hence, due to the lack of public updated data by BAMF, I compare the demographic characteristics of my sample (age, education level) to that of Rageb's survey to provide a manufactured level of accuracy that is close to reality. Sample representation is discussed in the results section. Lastly, I transform categorical variables such as purpose of stay and party preference to dummy variables.

Considering the private nature of some of the questions, I include both an opt-out answer if one is not comfortable. Around 1% of entries used this option over sensitive data such as sex (in cases of non-binary persons) and political views which are viewed as taboo subjects in the Syrian community. Moreover, knowing the age and marital status of refugees allow to detect cases of traditional marriages that used family unification to arrive in Germany which is another sensitive type of data that was not initially thought of. Consequently, I ensure the total anonymisation of the data and the removal of any variables that can accurately identify a participant such as city of origin, residence, and personal details. The survey ends with an option for participants to share their email addresses if they wish to be interviewed in the future for a repeated survey and to receive a copy of the research after completion.

#### **D. Hypothesis testing:**

In order to test the hypothesis regarding the effect of local context on political socialisation, we should ensure that 1. There is no internal correlation between our independent variables (multicollinearity), 2. That the latent DV is internally coherent (Cronbach's alpha test), 3. Establish the relationship between our DV and the three sets of IVs (geographic, demographic, political perception), 4. Create a general predictive model to the entire sample, 5. Compare the

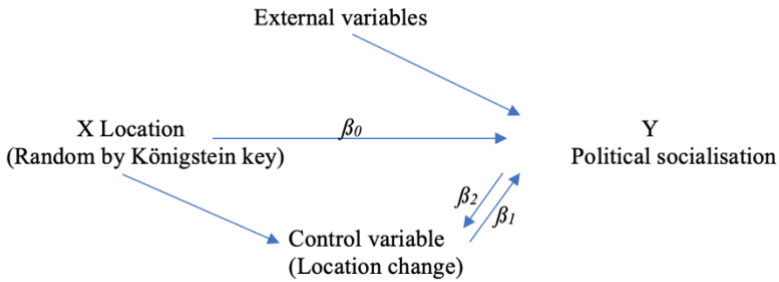
general model with two predictive models that control two aspects of location: one that separates the data of the two states (as well as a control group) and one that separates the data of refugees that were allocated and those who moved afterwards (Königstein effect on political socialisation)..

It is to note that the data can also be mapped with a geographical information-systems (GIS) analysis to visualise the findings and moving patterns. This can be done in three steps: Initial maps can provide an overview of where the cities and towns where the participants to ensure representation of the sample. The visualisation can also show the locations where participants who changed their locations moved to, and thus highlighting “preferred destinations.” This data can later be used for a network analysis of refugee movement across Germany, but such analysis is beyond the scope of this paper.

**E. Limitations:**

The first issue is that causal links and control for external variables. In other words, what if the local context of a state is not the main driver behind socialisation (control variable as mediator) but something within the state has that effect such as affiliation to an institution (control variable as collider). Figure 1 illustrates the causal chain ( $\beta_0$ ) in the research design between the random allocation of refugees by the Königstein key (X), the control variable (Königstein effectiveness), and political socialisation (Y). It is important to study the effect of the Königstein control variable to determine whether the variable is acting as a mediator as designed ( $\beta_1$ ) or a collider which

is influenced by both X and Y ( $\beta_2$ ). The nature of political socialisation as a latent variable means that external variables discussed above also contribute to



the political socialisation of refugees. *Figure 2 the issue of control variables as a mediator ( $\beta_1$ ) and as collider ( $\beta_2$ )*

As discussed in the review section, the process of political socialisation has many types (direct, indirect) and includes a wide range of agents. Hence, studying the effect of local context on political socialisation is not aimed at an overall explanation of refugee socialisation, but to include and measure the effect of a new variable in the field of political socialisation for

refugees. This issue requires future semi-structured interviews by adding variables that enquire about the perception and engagement with local politics. Many variables were not possible to include in this study due to its specialised focus, although further locational factors need to be incorporated into the model such as length of stay in the initial allocated location and relocations within and outside of states. Such data can be used for a time series study (Cox regression) to study the effectiveness of the Königstein key across time and refugee waves.

The second issue is the presence of external factors that may influence political socialisation. I address the issue by including questions about agents of socialisation and adding open-ended questions about external variables at the end of each section. It is important to reiterate here that aim of this study is to understand the “effect of context” caused by random allocation on political socialisation, not to create an explanatory model of refugee political socialisation. Figure 1 visualises the causal relationships in the designed study.

The third limitation is related to the nature of web surveys and covers the sample bias of online surveys. Online participants tend to be “better educated, wealthier, younger, and not representative in ethnic terms” (Couper 2000). Moreover, an aspect of self-selection takes place as a certain group might not wish to participate and can bias the sample. To address this issue, I use a form of snowball sampling by asking participants to share the survey with their networks of Syrians in Germany. The final limitation turned out to be an advantage as some Syrian refugees allocated to states other than those in this study still participated. As discussed in the data collection section, this led to around 20% ( $n = 160$ ) of noisy data that was then cleaned and used as a control variable.

## **5. Results and analysis:**

At the beginning of the section, I remind the reader of the context to investigate the question: what is the effect of local context on political socialisation after refugee random allocation? In order to deconstruct the question to test the hypothesis, we need to distinguish between the effect of location per se (federal state) and effect of allocation (Königstein) to a state since one is a place that has many characteristics and the other a decision. The section starts with a descriptive analysis of the data (demographic, geographic, and political variables), followed by

a multicollinearity test and an analysis of the explanatory power of the three IV groups. This allows us to create a General Predictive Model (GPM) for the DV based on the overall sample. Next, we control for location (state) and allocation (Königstein effectiveness) to determine whether there are variations in political socialisation scores between the two states, and between the groups that were allocated or matched. The section ends with a discussion on the hypothesis.

The sample collected (n= 584) from Syrians living in Germany (BR = 199, BW = 225, control: 160) provides a 95% confidence interval with 4% margin of error as a representative sample of the Syrian population in Germany according to BAMF official figures. The sample demographic variables show an average age of 32,2 (both for men and women), which indicates a level of accuracy since the latest survey in 2017 showed an average age of 26,8 years (Ragab und Rahmeier 2017, 19). Of the population, 69% were male, and 31% female, showing a slight increase in the number of men since the 61% in 2017. Moreover, 56% of participants were married, but only 32% of women compared to 64% of men. The gender imbalance in the Syrian refugee population is also reflected in the process of family due to an increase in arranged traditional weddings from Syria. However, the different nature of women arriving during the refugee wave and those arriving for family unification deserves a study in itself.

Moreover, context and choice are inherently related to gender when it comes to purpose of changing location after allocation (matching with professional, educational, or family ties). The gender imbalance is also presented in the purpose of stay question which received significantly different results by sex. 66% of women answered that they were married, and 50% of the female sample arrived via “family unification” and 18% for education and vocational training. By contrast, 56% of men changed their location because for work, 21% for education, 12% for family unification, and 8% for vocational training. Nevertheless, women showed a higher education level than the general sample with 57% of which have university degrees compared with 44% of men. The general sample indicated that 11% did not finish high school, 24% finished vocational training, 48% holds a university degree (3 years or more), and 14% have a master’s degree or higher. As a result, 52% of refugees have an advanced level of German (C1-C2), and 45% hold an intermediate level (B1-B2). This variable can identify the new arrivals by finding refugees with basic language level arriving for family unification, which constituted 5% of the sample<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> See Appendix 1 for any data privacy concerns.



Moving to geographical variables, 71% of respondents arrived between 2015-16 (refugee wave), 1% arrived before the wave, and 17% after the wave. This indicates the importance of process tracking in resettlement and matching efforts to avoid generalising findings to new arrivals. This variable was transferred into “length of stay” variable to measure for correlations with length of stay with political socialisation but found little to no correlation in the sample. Interestingly, both Syrian men and women have spent an average of 6.4 years in Germany. Furthermore, the question about changing location of residence for one of the Königstein exceptions (work, education, or family unification) showed that 57% of refugees (70% male) changed their assigned location, overwhelmingly for education and professional purposes. Indeed, education variable played a strong role in finding that 71% of refugees who changed their assigned location have a university degree or higher, indicating the important role of socio-economic variables in avoiding restrictions related to allocation of refugees in distant locations. Interestingly, 43% of refugees indicated that they would like to change their assigned location citing economic reasons such as cost of living and job opportunities. However, the answers were not analysed as this variable goes beyond the scope of this paper. Interestingly, the variable “satisfaction with living location” scored an average of 3.7/5, which is relatively high in comparison with other variables. This section provides information about refugee preferences in terms of living location and can help design a better allocation and matching system.

Finally in terms of political variables, and the latent dependent variable, the DV questions received the lowest scores in the survey, which is likely related to the taboo of politics in Syria. Remarkably, while opinion variables showed consistent results, political engagement variables showed varying results depending on the type of engagement. For example, while most respondents scored an average of 3.4 and 3.1/5 for opinion variables regarding perceived relevance and importance of politics to them personally, while they scored 1.3 and 1.5/5 for engagement questions such as political activity and participating in demonstrations. These variables were combined to create the DV “political socialisation score” as discussed in the methods section and received an average score of 5.8/15 with a standard deviation of 3.3 and a Cronbach’s alpha score of 0.7, which is relatively good considering the nature of the variable. Lastly, a party preference variable was added which showed very consistent results between the two sexes with around 27% SPD, 26% Green, and 23% CDU support. Intriguingly, these results significantly vary in correlation with the political socialisation of refugees per state as

supporters of minority parties are more active when they are not in the regional government, which explains the exceptional DV scores of Green supporters in BR.

### **Predictive analysis:**

Before starting predictive analysis, I check for internal multicollinearity within independent variables to avoid spurious correlations. Figure X shows that the strongest internal IV correlation is with German language level as it indicates duration of stay and education. Yet, location variables correlate with an average of  $r=0.1$ , demographic variables with 0.05, and political variables (except for DV variables) with 0.09. Hence, I can safely assume weak multicollinearity. Second, I test the interactions between the DV and the different types of IVs discussed above, to compare their explanatory power separately before joining them in a multi-regression and creating an explanatory model. Figure 2 shows the weighting of independent variable groups before the creation of a General Predictive Model (GPM).

In order to understand the effects of the variable groups, I first test them separately to check for a dominant variable group. Table X shows the summary of the categorical testing and highlights that the explanatory power of independent groups ( $r^2$ ) is between 6-17%.

First, I test for correlations only with geographic variables such as Location\_BW, Location\_Brandenburg, choice of location (Königstein), satisfaction with location, and desire to change the location. The results show a low correlation between political socialisation and the variables (Multiple R = 0.28,  $R^2 = 0.08$ ) but indicates high correlation with the two state-related variables ( $R = 0.67$  &  $0.76$ ,  $p = 0.02$  &  $0.05$ ) respectively. Interestingly, length of stay shows a medium correlation ( $R = 0.36$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ) which will be discussed later in relation to purpose of arrival and the effect of family unification of political socialisation. The dummy variable related to choice of living location shows that choice of location is the most significant variable in this set. This indicates the importance of choosing the living location for refugees to be engaged with local politics. In other words, if the location is chosen, there is more political socialisation. When only the strongest variables (+95% coefficient and  $p < 0.05$ ) are kept, the overall explanatory power decreases ( $R = 0.11$ ,  $R^2 = 0.01$ ) but coefficients increase to 0.66 for BW and 0.9 for BR ( $p = 0.03$ ,  $0.02$ ). This indicates that some of the variables have an explanatory power that is not directly correlated with political socialisation, but interacts with

other variables to alter the score. Such indirect processes are discussed in the methods limitations.

Second, I test for the relationship between the DV and demographic variables (age, sex, education, German level, marriage, and purpose of stay). This increased the overall explanatory power (Multiple R = 0.42, R<sup>2</sup> = 0.17) but it remains relatively low compared with local populations. Age showed little to no effect on political socialisation, and quite expectedly, level of German language strongly correlates with political socialisation in Germany (r = 0.85, p = 0.01). Weaker correlations were found for level of education (r=0.21, p=0.16) and marital status (r=-0.44, p=0.12), which shows that the impact of such variables differ between social groups and are

less significant in the case of refugees and political engagement. This raises the causality direction question whether interested refugees in politics study German more, or whether studying German leads to further political engagement.

German knowledge is a strong indicative variable since knowledge of German relates to sex, education, and length of stay of a refugee (shown by its medium multicollinearity). When testing the relationship between German knowledge and other independent variables, we find that it weakly correlates with level of education (r= 0.27), but it shows a stronger correlation with length of stay in Germany (r = 0.42). This suggests that the early arrivals of 2015-16 (71% of the population) are more politically active since they had longer time to learn about German politics. Separately, the effect of marriage on political engagement is also worth studying as it shows a moderate negative correlation that could relate to cultural variables.

Third, in terms of political preferences and party preferences, the explanation power of this variable group is similar to the geographic group but shows little strong influence (Multiple R = 0.25, R<sup>2</sup> = 0.06). The strongest variable for political participation is clearly the perception of politics as important (r=0.58, p=0.01) regardless of

Table 3 Weighting Independent Variable Groups

<i>Geographic variables</i>		
Multiple R	0,28	
R Square	0,08	
<b>Variables:</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>P-value</b>
Location_BW	0,67	0,02
Location_Brandenburg	0,76	0,05
Demo_Length_of_Stay	0,39	0,00
Location_Choice_Königstein	1,04	0,00
Location_Happines (1-5)	0,16	0,22
Location_Change_Wish	0,13	0,66
<i>Demographic variables</i>		
Multiple R	0,42	
R Square	0,17	
<b>Variables:</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>P-value</b>
Demo_Age	0,01	0,54
Demo_Sex_M	0,65	0,44
Demo_Sex_F	-0,13	0,88
Demo_Education_Level	0,21	0,16
Demo_marriage	-0,44	0,12
Demo_German_Level	0,85	0,00
Purpose_Work	-0,05	0,95
Purpose_Education	0,74	0,42
Purpose_Training	-0,12	0,90
Purpose_Family_Unification	-0,27	0,77
<i>Political Variables</i>		
Multiple R	0,25	
R Square	0,06	
<b>Variables:</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>P-value</b>
Pol_Perceived_Relevance	0,21	0,11
Pol_Perceived_Importance	0,58	0,00
Preference_SPD	0,54	0,18
Preference_Green	0,41	0,34
Preference_CDU	-0,19	0,67

whether the politics are relevant to the refugee ( $r=0.21$ ,  $p=0,11$ ). The relationship between perception of importance and relevance provides insights into the political engagement of refugees, especially in relation to the type of political activity conducted and will be addressed in the discussion section. Moreover, the support of only three parties provided medium correlation with political engagement but with relatively high margins of error. The largest correlation is with support for the Social Democratic Party SPD) ( $r = 0.54$ ,  $p = 0.18$ ). This relates to the effect of context on political engagement (especially in Brandenburg) and will be discussed in the following section.

Table 4 General Predictive Model (GPM)

<i>Multi Regression</i>								
Multiple R	0,47							
R Square	0,23							
Adjusted R Square	0,21							
Standard Error	2,99							
Observations	583,00							
ANOVA								
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>			
Regression	12,00	1482,48	123,54	13,84	0,00			
Residual	570,00	5089,83	8,93					
Total	582,00	6572,32						
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95,0%</i>	<i>Upper 95,0%</i>
Intercept	-1,85	0,81	-2,27	0,02	-3,44	-0,25	-3,44	-0,25
Location_BW	0,56	0,28	2,05	0,04	0,02	1,10	0,02	1,10
Location_Brandenburg	0,59	0,36	1,65	0,10	-0,11	1,28	-0,11	1,28
Demo_Length_of_Stay	0,20	0,08	2,34	0,02	0,03	0,36	0,03	0,36
Location_Choice_Königstein	0,44	0,26	1,68	0,09	-0,07	0,95	-0,07	0,95
Demo_Education_Level	0,26	0,14	1,83	0,07	-0,02	0,53	-0,02	0,53
Demo_marriage	-0,57	0,27	-2,13	0,03	-1,09	-0,04	-1,09	-0,04
Purpose_Education	0,61	0,33	1,83	0,07	-0,05	1,27	-0,05	1,27
Demo_German_Level	0,69	0,13	5,20	0,00	0,43	0,95	0,43	0,95
Pol_Perceived_Importance	0,39	0,12	3,36	0,00	0,16	0,61	0,16	0,61
Pol_Perceived_Relevance	0,24	0,13	1,92	0,05	-0,01	0,49	-0,01	0,49
Preference_Green	0,85	0,32	2,66	0,01	0,22	1,48	0,22	1,48
Preference_SPD	0,81	0,29	2,76	0,01	0,23	1,38	0,23	1,38

Finally, after measuring the exact weights of each of the variables on the total sample, I establish the general predictive model (GPM) using the strongest influencing variables on political socialisation. I select the IVs with the p-score of 0.5 or less to decrease the margin of error. This increases the overall explanatory power of the model (Multiple R = 0.46) but still has a relatively low R-squared ( $R^2 = 0.23$ ). The results also present slightly higher explanatory power to the demographic model with a slight improvement. Hence, we can start to test our hypothesis about the effect of context and allocation to compare it with the GPM below in Table X.

### Hypothesis testing:

Starting with a reminder of the null hypothesis: allocation of refugees to states does not affect their political socialisation. This section includes two steps to study the effect of local context (location) and allocation on political socialisation. First, I control for location in the GPM to test for variations of predictors within the model based on the location. This allows us to answer the question of whether “location matters” and if the political socialisation process is different in the two states (and a control group of noisy data, n=160), but does not indicate anything about secondary movement. Second, I control for Königstein effectiveness by separating the sample into a group that was allocated and remained in its location, and a group which matched itself with a location in accordance with the three allowed exceptions (work, education, family unification). This allows us to test for the effect of random allocation of the Königstein key on the political socialisation of refugees, as well as test the hypothesis to measure the effect of local context on assigned refugees in the two states.

### A. Effect of location:

Simply comparing the average DV score of each state would only give limited explanatory power to the mode (BW average is 6.06 while Brandenburg is 6.24). Since our data contains noise from other states, I test the GPM on the noise to test for patterns of variable effectiveness beyond the two studied states. Table X shows the results of applying the GPM to the two states and the control group.

Table 5 Comparing the effect of variables on separate regions

Variable		BW, n= 225		BR, n= 199		Control group, n= 160	
<b>Explanatory power</b>		Multiple R = 0.57, R <sup>2</sup> = 33%		Multiple R = 0.44, R <sup>2</sup> = 20%		Multiple R = 0.46, R <sup>2</sup> = 21%	
<b>Details</b>		<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Geo	Locaiton_Length_of_Stay	0,02	0,90	0,36	0,14	0,26	0,03
	Location_Choice_Königstein	1,01	0,01	0,04	0,95	0,10	0,80
Demo	Demo_Education_Level	0,32	0,15	0,60	0,16	0,11	0,58
	Demo_marriage	-1,01	0,02	-0,97	0,23	-0,03	0,93
	Demo_Purpose_Education	0,30	0,56	0,94	0,35	0,54	0,26
	Demo_German_Level	0,94	0,00	0,07	0,87	0,75	0,00
Poli	Pol_Perceived_Importance	0,33	0,07	0,72	0,04	0,23	0,17
	Pol_Perceived_Relevance	0,54	0,01	0,05	0,89	0,14	0,45
	Preference_Green	0,63	0,19	1,91	0,06	0,66	0,16
	Preference_SPD	0,50	0,27	0,81	0,34	0,97	0,02

The results find that the same independent variables have significantly different results on the same refugee group in different states, hence rejecting the null hypothesis that location has no effect on political socialisation. Interestingly, the specialised model by location produced a higher explanatory power in BW but a similar (slightly lower) explanatory power in BR and the control group. This highlights variations in variable interaction with the sample based on the location. However, the variations between the two states in comparison to the control group and the GPM strongly suggest the different variables that are commonly used to study political socialisation (geographic, demographic, and political) do not fully explain the variations in political socialisation between the various states. The next section discusses the main discrepancies and potential explanations.

First, in terms of categories, geographical variables such as “duration of stay” loses its explanatory power in BW while others such as Königstein effectiveness (choice of location) become significantly more important. This means that in the view of refugees, the choice of where to live is more important than the qualities of the place itself. By contrast, the same variables produce the opposite result in BR and showing no relationship between choosing the living location and the score of political socialisation. This supports the hypothesis about the effect of location on political socialisation but does not address the issue of secondary movement of allocated refugees. Second, demographic variables also present a divide between BW and BR in terms of importance of German competency in BW vs the purpose of stay in BR, while both states share a strong negative correlation between marriage and political activity, as well as a medium correlation with the level of education. Third, political variables present a better explanation about the incentives of refugees to become politically socialised in relation to the local political context in their state. Interestingly, BW presents moderate correlations with all four political variables, while support for the Green party and perception of political importance are stronger indicators of political socialisation score in BR. This is potentially related to increased mobilisation when a preferred party is in the minority. The discrepancy of results between perceived relevance and importance will be discussed in the next section. Finally, the control group showed strong correlation with SPD support which is likely related to the latest national elections and proposed amendments to naturalisation law.

## **B. Königstein’s effect on political socialisation:**

This comparison allows us to study the effect of the Königstein key on the refugee populations of the two states. Further studies can track length of stays before reallocation to study the geographical nature of refugee preference.

*Table 6 Königstein Key's Effect on Political Socialisation of Refugees*

<b>Variable</b>		<b>Allocated: No, n= 337</b>		<b>Allocated: Yes, n= 245</b>	
<b>Explanatory power</b>		Multiple R = 0.46, R <sup>2</sup> = 21%		Multiple R = 0.48, R <sup>2</sup> = 23%	
<b>Details</b>		<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Geo	Locaiton_BW	1,04	0,01	-0,07	0,86
	Location_BR	0,48	0,32	0,67	0,21
	Location_Duration_of_Stay	0,25	0,03	0,15	0,25
Demo	Demo_Education_Level	0,28	0,15	0,23	0,27
	Demo_marriage	-0,75	0,04	-0,26	0,53
	Demo_Purpose_Education	0,24	0,58	1,15	0,04
	Demo_German_Level	0,81	0,00	0,64	0,00
Poli	Pol_Perceived_Importance	0,24	0,15	0,57	0,00
	Pol_Perceived_Relevance	0,36	0,04	0,07	0,67
	Preference_Green	0,89	0,05	0,91	0,05
	Preference_SPD	0,82	0,04	0,83	0,06

Interestingly, geographical variables both showed medium-strong correlations with the DV. BW seemed to emphasise its importance of choice of location while BR showed a medium and noisy relation. This is likely because all refugees were allocated to the Eastern states after the influx of 2015 while not all refugees who arrived in the West had to be reallocated which creates internal competition about finding jobs or reasons to stay in the richer states, although this is an assumption and further investigation is needed. It is to note that “choice of location” logically affects the satisfaction of location score, even though the score is almost identical in both states (3.1/5). Allocated refugees reported an average of 2.6/5 happiness score while refugees who reallocated reported a score of 3.6/5. This could play a part in how refugees view politics as important regardless of its relevance due to its impact on their lives.

Second, the largest discrepancy in variable effect was related to demographic indicators. Both cases of allocation and secondary-movement highlighted the importance of German language level in political socialisation and not the importance of education level. Refugees who were allocated had a stronger correlation between “purpose of stay” variables and political socialisation, while secondary movers showed a strong negative correlation with “marital status.” Third, political variables provide a very consistent result in terms of party support and

political socialisation for both groups. Still, perception of politics was the strongest dividing variable between allocated and matched refugees.

## **6. Conclusion and discussion:**

The paper found significant variations in political socialisation scores between the two states and between allocated vs self-matched refugees. Remarkably, most independent variables showed consistent performance when controlling for location (BR/BW) and choice (allocated / self-matched). The high rate of secondary movement following the Königstein allocation indicates that random allocation is meant to be temporary, but the fact that 45% of refugees remained in their allocated cities raises questions about the effect of such distribution. This paper provided context-related explanations for the variations in political socialisation scores between the two studied states. Yet, it is important to reiterate that context alone cannot alone explain political socialisation but aims to shed light on important variables in the process that stems from the type of refugee allocation policy.

The use of “natural experiments” in social science research allows to study the effect of local context on various aspects of refugee integration. The recent Ukrainian refugee crisis highlights the need for an allocation and matching system that is both flexible and effective across the EU. The results are in line with existing research on refugee labour-market integration since “integrated” refugees were able to join the labour market by reallocating. Meanwhile, ethical considerations can be raised about the allocation of refugees who are unable to reallocate due to situations beyond their control, most commonly mental health reasons. This research was able to shed light on some aspects of the effect of context such as geographical, demographic, and political variables, yet further research can be undertaken to explain the discrepancies in some of the results. Indeed, the design limitations assumed the homogeneity of the Syrian refugee population, used online surveys, and stratified sampling. Yet, the strength of the results for the case study of two states support the hypothesis to expand the study to the national level.

To recap, the study of political socialisation is important in asylum policy, yet the process of socialisation is different from migrants and is highly dependent on context. When controlling for location and allocation, I found that predicting variables interact differently with political socialisation, meaning that location matters, but choice matters more in political socialisation. This research on refugee integration, allocation, and matching preferences is ever more



important to the EU's foreign policy and economic interest, especially in cases of transnational allocation policies and rules for secondary movement. Ultimately, even though this study uses technical and academic language to describe and analyse the distribution of refugees, researchers should keep in mind the individuality and humanity of each refugee, and the policy consequences of such research.

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## **APPENDIX 1:**

### **Description:**

- The survey targets Syrians living in Baden-Württemberg and Brandenburg (duration of the questionnaire: 5 minutes)
- Title: The local context of refugee political socialisation: a mixed-method analysis of Syrian refugees in Germany
- The information I collect is meant for academic use only and will not be shared with third parties.
- Thank you in advance to everyone who helps complete and publish the survey

### **Introduction, project description, aim, and privacy information:**

My name is Zakaria Al Shmaly, I'm 27 years old from Aleppo, and I arrived in Germany in 2016. I studied Political Sciences in Freiburg and now I'm doing my masters at the European University Institute in Florence. I was first allocated to Bremen but then moved to Freiburg to pursue my studies.

As a Syrian, I learned about German politics from university and by discussing with German colleagues. Indeed, it is very important for me as a scholar and a future German citizen. Yet, while it is easy for me to protest, it is harder to choose a political party to support.

As part of my Master Thesis at the European University Institute ([www.eui.eu](http://www.eui.eu)), I Zakaria Al Shmaly ([Zakaria.alshmaly@eui.eu](mailto:Zakaria.alshmaly@eui.eu)) am conducting research project on the effect of local context on refugee political socialisation using surveys and interviews. The project is a cornerstone for my PhD which will expand to cover all 16 German federal states. The project is supervised by Prof. Kalypso Nicolaidis ([Kalypso.nicolaidis@eui.eu](mailto:Kalypso.nicolaidis@eui.eu)) and will be completed before 15.05.2022.

I would like to ask you to participate in this research project as you are a representative of my demographic of interest as a Syrian in Germany who will receive citizenship after living in Germany for 8 years (soon to be 5). The project employs a mixed-method approach by combining statistical analysis with in-person interviews. You can sign up for interviews if you wish at the end of the survey. However, it is completely optional.

I will share the results of our project with you if you wish. In addition, this project may benefit you by providing insight into how the location you live influence your political views in comparison with other Syrians, as well as the future political behaviour of a potential Syrian-German voting block.

Your rights as a participant in this project are extremely important to me. Most importantly, your privacy will be protected and no personal information about you will be shared with anyone. You can decide to withdraw your participation at any point by sending me an email ([Zakaria.alshmaly@eui.eu](mailto:Zakaria.alshmaly@eui.eu)). Data gathered from this project will not be kept for longer than one year after its completion. If you agree to participate, kindly press next.

### **Part 1 – Geographic Information:**

- Which city/town in Syria are you from? (Short text)
- Which year did you arrive in Germany? (numerical)
- In which state (Land) do you live? (multichoice)

- Which city/town do you live in? (Short text)
- Did you choose the city/town of your residence or were you assigned? (multichoice)
- What is the purpose of your stay in your town? (multichoice)
- How happy are you with your region of residence? (1-5 scale with 5 being the highest)
- Would you like to change the region of your residence? (Dummy variable)
- If you would like to change the area of your residence, what would be your motivation? (Short text)

**Part 2 – Political Engagement:**

- How relevant do you think German politics is for Syrian refugees? (1-5 scale with 5 being the highest)
- How engaged are you in German politics? (multichoice)
- How important is German politics in your life? (1-5 scale with 5 being the highest)
- Where do you learn about German politics? (Multi checkboxes)
- Have you ever participated in legal demonstrations since you arrived in Germany? (Multi checkboxes)
- Do you discuss German politics with your German contacts? (Multi checkboxes)
- Which German political party appeals most to you? (multichoice)

**Part 3 – Demographic Information:**

- Age (numerical)
- Sex (multichoice)
- Level of education (multichoice)
- In which country did you study? (Short text)
- Are you married? (Dummy variable)
- Final Notes: If you would like to be interviewed, kindly include your phone number, email, and any other notes. (Long text)

GDPR Note: The information I collect is meant for academic use only and will not be shared with third parties.

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