

Party Identification among Germany's (Spät)Aussiedler:  
The Sources of Favoring CDU/CSU or AfD

by  
Natalie Klauser

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Supervisors:

Prof.dr. René Torenvlied, University of Twente

Le Anh Nguyen Long, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster

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## List of Abbreviations

AfD	Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany)
CDU	Christlich-Demokratische Union Deutschlands (Christian Democratic Union)
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (Christian Social Union)
df	Degrees of freedom
DJR	Deutsche Jugend aus Russland
e.V.	Eingetragener Verein (registered Association)
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)
FN	Front National (National Front)
GLES	German Longitudinal Election Study
JSDR	Jugend- und Studentenring der Deutschen aus Russia
LmDR	Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland
M	Mean
Mdn	Median
<i>N</i>	Number of observations; sample size
OR	Odds Ratio
SES	Socioeconomic status
SOEP	Socio-Economic Panel
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
<i>p</i>	Probability
PVV	Partij voor de Vrijheid (Party of Freedom)
$R^2$	R-squared
SD	Standard deviation
Sig.	Significance
<i>t</i>	T-value
VIRA	Verein zur Integration von russlanddeutschen Aussiedlern

## Abstract

German media claim the *Alternative für Deutschland* that was newly elected in the German Bundestag would be particularly supported by Russian-German repatriates today after this group of ethnic Germans had for decades been considered to identify mostly with the *Christlich-Demokratische Union Deutschlands*. To investigate the Aussiedler's long-term motives to identify with a particular political party, this study presents a battery of party identification sources based on the Michigan model of electoral choice and on more recent party identification literature. The personal characteristics' impact on the Aussiedler's party identification was investigated by statistically analyzing data from nearly 300 individuals from all over Germany. This empirical data was collected on different social media platforms and with the participation of 13 Russian-German associations and networks. The results from bivariate analyses and multinomial logistic regression yield that compared to CDU and SPD identification, Eurosceptic and nationalist attitudes are important predictors for the identification with the AfD. Religiosity, measured through church attendance frequency, is in comparison found strongly related to the CDU party identification. The results from an explorative mediation analysis additionally enable to formulate the innovative hypothesis for the exclusive comparison of CDU and AfD identification that Aussiedler who feel mostly as Germans are more likely to be less Eurosceptic and thereby more likely to identify with the CDU instead of the AfD.

*Keywords: AfD, CDU, Party Identification, Aussiedler, Nationalism, Euroscepticism*

# I. Introduction

## 1.1. Problem Background

Particularly in recent years, Europe has been experiencing a shift in party support towards the decline of support for the political establishment parties. By definition, the term of political establishment comprises the political elites who have traditionally been participating in government, or who the main governing parties are willing to form a coalition with (Schedler, 1996; Abedi, 2002). However, a variety of recent election results in several European countries have signalled the rising influence of and support for anti-establishment parties. For instance in March 2017, the right-wing populist *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV) gained the second most votes and thus 20 seats in the Dutch federal election (NOS, 2017). Earlier in 2017, Marine Le Pen as the candidate of the right-wing populist *Front National* (FN) ran for president and gained 34 percent of the votes during the final round of the election (Kentish, 2017).

On 24 September 2017, people all over Europe followed the federal parliamentary election that took place in Germany. Ultimately, the *Alternative für Deutschland* (Alternative for Germany -AfD) newly gained 12.6 percent of the electoral votes and was thus elected into the German Bundestag as the third strongest party with 94 seats. The previous governing fractions, the *Christlich-Demokratische Union Deutschlands* / *Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern* (CDU/CSU)<sup>1</sup> and the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (SPD) were re-elected the largest and second largest parliamentary group with respectively 32.9 percent and 20.5 percent of votes (Deutscher Bundestag, 2017), which enabled them to form a Great Coalition de novo. However, as a striking difference, the AfD gained 7.9 percentage points more than during the last federal election in 2013, when this party did not gain seats in parliament. Besides the novelty that the AfD, as an anti-establishment party, was successful on federal level, the latest German federal election was accompanied by another societally relevant development: German media increasingly emphasize that the *Alternative für Deutschland* would nowadays receive support in particular among many Russian-German repatriates in Germany (Klimeniouk, 2017; Haas, 2017; Beitzer, 2017). A frequently forwarded argument for this assumption is that the AfD gained

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<sup>1</sup> The CSU (Christian Social Union) presents the Christian Democratic Union's (CDU) Bavarian sister party. In the course of this paper, the term of CDU party identification also comprises the Bavarians' attachment with the CSU.

many votes during the federal election particularly in constituencies, which are inhabited mainly by Russian-German repatriates, so-called “Aussiedler”. These constituencies had usually been won by Christian Democratic candidates in the past. In Pforzheim-Buckenberg for instance, the AfD won 36.9 percent of the votes while the CDU gained only 25.9 percent, which was 30.5 percentage points less than it had gained during the federal election in 2013 (Frank, 2017).

The German term “Aussiedler” (pl.) depicts the Russian-Germans, who previously used to live in the area of the former Soviet Union (see Chapter 2.1 for a detailed explanation of the term). Especially in the 1990s, Germany experienced a great influx of Russian-German repatriates, and from 1990 to 2000, more than 1.7 million Aussiedler came to live in their ancestors’ home country Germany (Worbs et al, 2013). Thus today, among the 61.5 million German citizens who are eligible to vote, 1.5 million are Russian-German repatriates (Frumkina & Stöber, 2017; Goerres, 2017). In the past decades, this large minority group was considered to identify mostly with the CDU. In the 1990s for instance, 75 percent of the Russian-German repatriates indicated political inclination with the Christian Democrats (Kroh & Tucci, 2009). On the one hand, this party identification among Russian-Germans was considered a long-term result of the CDU’s Aussiedler-friendly policies, in particular since the 1990s under the Christian-Democratic chancellor Helmut Kohl (Wüst, 2006). On the other hand, the CDU’s Christian-conservative ideology met the ethnic Germans’ historically incited values of prioritizing their Christian faith, the family and German traditions (FOCUS, 2017). However, in 2015 only 45 percent of the Aussiedler indicated to identify with the CDU (Wittlif & Litta, 2016) and preliminary published results from the Immigrant German Election Study by Achim Goerres, Dennis Spies and Sabrina J. Mayer, yield that only 27 percent of the Russian-German respondents, who participated in the federal election in September 2017, voted for the CDU (Goerres et al., 2018). Besides this decrease in political support for the CDU, 15 percent reportedly elected the AfD (ibid.), while in 2014 only 10 percent of the Russian-Germans had reported the intention to vote for the AfD (Das Erste, 2017). Furthermore, 36 percent of the respondents who elected the AfD in 2017, reported to have voted the CDU in 2013 (Goerres et al., 2017). Thus, while the Christian Democratic Union is generally still found to be the most preferred party among Russian-German repatriates, the decrease in electoral support for the CDU and the increase in support for the anti-establishment party indicate a significant change in political party preferences among this group of ethnic Germans.

However, so far there has been few research concerning the Russian-German repatriates' current party identification, their "long-term psychological attachment to a certain [political] party" (Budge et al., 2010, p.83), which is considered as the key determinant of the individual's vote choice (Campbell et al, 1960; Arzheimer, 2017). Existing research on the Aussiedler's party preferences partly does not involve the AfD, which was established only a few years ago in 2013. More recent studies either focus exclusively on the Aussiedler's vote choice or, when dealing with party identification, do not inform for which reasons Russian-German repatriates nowadays identify with the AfD instead of another German political party (see Chapter 2.2. for a thorough discussion about research on the Aussiedler's party preferences). Therefore, this research investigates the sources of party identification among Aussiedler in Germany today.

## **1.2. Literature on the Sources of Party Identification**

Concerning sources of party identification, Angus Campbell and his colleagues, the founders of the classic Michigan model of electoral choice, as well as a variety of other scholars conclude that the party identification of one's personal environment, socioeconomic characteristics and religion present important predictors for a person's identification with a particular political party (Campbell et al., 1954; Campbell et al., 1960; Goren, 2005; Dalton, 2016). As recent research in the German context also finds a significant impact of the personal environment's party identification (Quandt & Ohr, 2011a) and of socioeconomic characteristics (Kroh & Fetz, 2017; Brenke & Kritikos, 2016) on the Germans' party identification, this study reuses these predictors. However, instead of religious affiliation, this study investigates religiosity measured through church attendance frequency as an adjusted predictor because existing research only points to differences in church attendance frequency between German CDU and AfD identifiers (Schoen & Weßels, 2016).

Aside from these predictors, in the classical works by Campbell and his colleagues as well as in several recent studies the relationship between ethnic identity and party identification in the American context has been investigated. Miller and Shanks (1996) as well as Uhlaner and Garcia (2006) conclude a "loyal and long-standing identification with the Democratic Party" (Uhlaner & Garcia, 2005, p.74) among American voters with Mexican and Puerto Rican origins. This identification is seen as a possible result of the Democrats' governmental programs in



support of Hispanic minorities (ibid.). Regarding Russian-Germans, a study by Rafaela Dancygier and Elizabeth N. Saunders (2016) from Yale University points to the importance to additionally consider ethnic identification when investigating the Aussiedler's party identification. Ultimately, Dancygier and Saunders (2016) refrained from analysing any group of German immigrants or the Aussiedler in their cross-national study on party identification and policy attitudes among immigrants in Great Britain and Germany. They argue that "immigrants have only recently been able to vote in Germany" (Dancygier & Saunders, 2006, p. 964). Yet in the case of the Aussiedler, the two researchers admit that the Russian-German repatriates are granted the German citizenship (ibid.) and therefore have the right to vote in Germany automatically following from their German heritage (Tichomirowa, 2015). Thus, as the Russian-German repatriates might potentially develop a party identification soon after their arrival in Germany, there is no plausible reason why the Aussiedler's party identification and ethnic identification as a potential predictor should not be investigated.

Furthermore, following from additional previous research findings, ideology presents another potential determinant of party identification. For instance, an earlier study by Smith (1999) revealed that the individual's political ideological attitudes significantly affect his/her party inclination. Besides previous research results, ideology as a potential predictor of party identification is particularly relevant in the case of the Russian-Germans. For decades, their distinct traditional value system was considered as an important reason for their strong identification with the CDU (Orange-Handelsblatt, 2017; Tietze, 2008). Today, it is this traditional value system which is considered to motivate Russian-Germans to a large extent to newly support the AfD as this party's right-wing program meets the approval of many Aussiedler (FOCUS, 2017). Therefore, this research also examines in how far the Aussiedler's ideological convictions affect their party identification.

### 1.3. Research Question

Overall, due to the topicality of this subject and in consideration of the current gap in scientific literature on the Russian-German repatriates' party identification and sources thereof, this study will deal with the following main research question:

*To what extent do the personal environment's party preferences, religiosity, socioeconomic characteristics and ideological convictions affect the party identification of the Aussiedler in Germany today?*

Thus, the personal environment's party preferences, religiosity, socioeconomic characteristics and ideological convictions are investigated as exogenous variables. Furthermore, party identification is dealt with as the endogenous variable of this research. Besides, while the group of Aussiedler serve as the unit of observation, this study looks at Germany as its research setting. Furthermore, the German Aussiedler are chosen as the units of observation of this research as this group's party identification has recently been subject to increased public debate in Germany, given its longstanding identification with the CDU, which has allegedly shifted now. Overall, under the party identification variable, all parties that were elected into the German Bundestag are included. However, for relevance and topicality reasons as well as for the analysis to yield more focused and meaningful results, this research focuses on comparing the determinants of the Russian-Germans' current party identification with the *Christlich-Demokratische Partei Deutschlands* (CDU) and the *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD).

### 1.4. Relevance of this Research for Society and Science

From a societal point of view, it is important to investigate the Aussiedler's motives to identify with a particular political party to enable a better understanding of this large minority's attitudes and possibilities to address their societal concerns. For decades, the Aussiedler were for decades considered to have a stable and strong party identification with the Christian Democrats. In this context, this study potentially reveals decisive reasons for why Aussiedler allegedly changed their previously stable party identification. After all, the alleged party identification shift of many Aussiedler towards supporting an anti-establishment party could be a result of people's hitherto neglected serious worries and dissatisfaction with the current

political situation in Germany, which the investigation of the Aussiedler's current party identification and its sources might disclose. Moreover, the results of this study could also provide a better understanding for underlying reasons of changes in party identification, particularly concerning increased attachment to anti-establishment parties, in the German society as a whole or in other European countries. With reference to the European level, the issue of shifting party identification is particularly relevant as it is linked to the support and rise of anti-establishment parties throughout Europe, which needs to be thoroughly investigated and understood.

As to the scientific relevance of this research, it aims to close a current research gap. While the recent federal election results and a few studies point to a certain shift of party preferences towards increased support for the AfD, there is few scientific evidence and clarity about the underlying reasons why Germans, and particularly Aussiedler, shift from a previously comparably stable political identification with the Christian Democratic Party towards the identification with the AfD. So far, few studies were published dealing concretely with the party identification of Russian-German Aussiedler. These published works did not investigate yet the sources of identifying with the AfD. Besides the novel investigation of potential sources, which might significantly impact the Aussiedler's party identification, this research is additionally innovative as it does not only examine the classical party identification sources from the Michigan Model, but also ideology and ethnic identification as potential predictors. This model of party identification, which is constructed on basis of the classical works by Campbell and his colleagues (1954; 1960) as well as on more recent electoral research, might be applicable beyond this study and reused in the context of future research on party identification in Germany.

In the following, before addressing the main question of this research empirically, the terminology and historical background of the Aussiedler as well as the current state of research regarding the Russian-German repatriates' political inclination, including the impact of personal characteristics, is evaluated in order to gain insights into the most recent findings, which shall serve as a basis for the subsequent analysis. Moreover, prior to the presentation of newly collected empirical data, relevant theories, concepts and scientific literature about party identification and its determinants are examined in order to build the theoretical model, which shall serve as basis for the explanatory analysis of this research.

## II. Theoretical and Conceptual Considerations

### 2.1. Legal Definition of the Term “Aussiedler” and Historical Background

Referring to the German Federal Expellees Act, the German term *Aussiedler* in the Russian-German context refers to migrants of German descent from the Republics of the former Soviet Union, who applied for admission and then arrived in Germany between 1950 and 1993 (German Federal Expellee Law, §1, (1), 2.). The migrants who came to Germany under the mentioned conditions in 1993 or later are called *Spätaussiedler* (“meaning late repatriate”), but in general the two terms are used interchangeably (Panagiotidis, 2015). Also, in the frame of the following study, the terms “Aussiedler” and “Russian-German repatriate” will be used exchangeably.

Overall, the Russian-German repatriates are characterized by their German roots, which motivated the return to their ancestors’ native home country Germany. Historically, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, their German ancestors followed the invitation by Tsarina Catherine the Great of Russia to settle in the Russian Empire in order to cultivate its land and support its economic development. Thus, from 1764 to 1773, 104 German colonies were established in Russia by more than 8000 families in total. There, the German culture was extensively preserved until these people belonging to an ethnic minority who were seen as spies and fascists during the world wars, were deported to other regions of the former Soviet Union. Ultimately, due to autonomy movements since 1964 and Gorbachev's perestroika policy that liberalized the immigration regulation, about 3 million Russian-Germans returned to their ancestors’ country of origin Germany from 1987 to 2005 (Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland, 2015).

Generally, the term “Aussiedler” does not only refer to the Russian-German people who came to Germany from the former Soviet Union. It refers to ethnic Germans in general, whose German ancestors once emigrated from Germany to colonize circumjacent territory of today's East European countries - such as Poland, Hungary and Romania - and who came back to live in Germany (bpb, 2012). However, this research focuses on the Russian-German repatriates who came from the former Soviet Union and who present the biggest group of ethnic repatriates living in the country (Pfetsch, 1999, p.12). Most recent studies and research findings, which are related to the German repatriates’ party identification and vote preference, will be reviewed in the following.

## 2.2. Research on Party Identification and Vote Preference in Germany

Concerning the party attachment of migrants in Germany, Martin Kroh and Ingrid Tucci published a study for the German Institute of Economic Research (DIW) in 2009. The evaluation of at that time recent data from the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) yielded that on average, between 2000 and 2008, still 65 percent of the (Spät-)Aussiedler identified with the CDU/CSU in comparison to a rate of 75 percent in the 1990s (Kroh & Tucci, 2009). Thus, the findings already reveal a decline in support for the Christian Democrats among the Aussiedler. However, this research does not include the AfD because the party did not exist yet in 2009.

In the frame of another recent study, Karl Brenke and Alexander Kritikos (2017), investigated the relationship between various demographic variables, including socioeconomic status, and party support in Germany. Similarly as the study by Niedermayer and Hofrichter (2016), this research found that identifying with the AfD varies with socioeconomic status (SES). Thus, party support for the AfD was found particularly high in East Germany as well as among men, the middle-aged, low-waged workers, employees or the unemployed as well as among voters with middle-ranking degrees. In contrast, the CDU was found to be rather preferred by people with a comparably higher income (comparably less than the FPD- and Greens-identifiers but more than those preferring the SPD, the Left and the AfD) and a high-ranked degree (Brenke & Kritikos, 2017).

Moreover, a study by Martin Kroh and Karolina Fetz from 2016, which also evaluated SOEP data, particularly focused on the AfD supporters. Among other results, it yielded that among those who identified with the AfD in 2016, 20 percent had not gone voting in the federal election in 2013, 32 percent had supported the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD), 9 percent had voted for the Left Party and only 2 percent of the respondents indicated to have moved from the CDU/CSU to the AfD (Kroh & Fetz, 2016). Thus, this research indicates that the CDU did not lose as many voters to the AfD but that particularly previous non-voters support the party.

However, these comparably recent studies do not yield findings about the party preferences of the particular group of Russian-German repatriates. In contrast, a policy brief by Wittlif and Litta (2016), which is based on data from the Integration Barometer<sup>2</sup> collected

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<sup>2</sup> The Integration Barometer is a representative German public survey, which involves both Germans without and with a migration background (Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration, n.d)

between March and August 2015, compares the party preferences of German migrants while also involving the Aussiedler. It was found that the majority of the (Spät)Aussiedler (45.2 percent) still identifies with the Christian Democrats but that the support has decreased with the years. Simultaneously, the success of the smaller parties, such as the Left Party (11.5 percent), the Greens (8.2 percent) and the AfD (4.7 percent) was found to increase among the Russian-German repatriates (Wittlif & Litta, 2016, p. 26). Concerning the AfD, the authors argue that the party would particularly seek the support of people with a migration background, who refuse new waves of migration, which would apply to the Russian Germans (ibid.).

Furthermore, according to statistics from an ongoing national study by Panagiotidis and Doerschler, among the approximately 1.7 million Aussiedler in Germany who are eligible to vote, 10 percent would have reportedly voted for the AfD in 2014, while in 2016, 16 percent of the Russian-German respondents indicated their intention to vote for the *Alternative für Deutschland*. Contrarily, in the same year, only 10.5 percent of the German respondents without a migration background would have elected the AfD (Das Erste, 2017).

More current released preliminary results from the ongoing reportedly representative study by Goerres and his colleagues substantiate that the support for the AfD has considerably increased, currently amounting to about 27 percent (Goerres et al., 2018). However, neither of these recent published or ongoing studies involving the AfD and mainly dealing with the Aussiedler's vote choice has so far disclosed any results about ideology as party preference predictor or any potential reasons for the Russian-Germans' party identification with a particular political party.

### **2.3. Why Party Identification is Key**

After having addressed previous research results on party preferences of Aussiedler and generally in how far certain personal characteristics have been found significantly related to particular party preferences in Germany, an argumentation needs to follow why the following research deals with party identification as its endogenous variable.

Most importantly, the Aussiedler's current party identification instead of their vote choice was chosen for the investigation concretely due to the alleged party identification shift among many Aussiedler over the past few decades. The continuous decline in the Aussiedler's party identification with the CDU, which was traditionally considered as highly stable, raises societally and scientifically relevant questions particularly given the newly detected increased support for

the AfD. At the same time, aside from recent results about the Aussiedler's latest voting behavior, so far, there is a gap in literature on the Russian-German repatriates' current party identification as well as factors that shape this psychological attachment among the Aussiedler. Overall, the examination of the Russian-Germans' sources of party identification might also point to underlying reasons for the change of party identification of a considerable number of Aussiedler in Germany in the past decades. After all, the investigation of political identification and sources might provide evidence to explain reorientations regarding party support and the particular political parties' political success among Russian-German resettlers.

Originally, party identification has been defined as the "most enduring of political attitudes, responsible for shaping a variety of values and perceptions, and, therefore, an appropriate starting point for any analysis of partisan political preference" (Miller & Shanks, 1996, p.117). However, the assertion about the long-term nature of party identification in Germany and other European countries has been strongly contested by different scholars in the past.

The work by Budge, Crewe and Farlie under the title *Party Identification and Beyond: Representations of Voting and Party Competition* (2010), which had already been published in 1976, criticizes the value of the concept of party identification along with its applicability in Europe. With a particular focus on the analysis of Dutch election data from the 1970s, the authors conclude that party identification would not prove to be stable in the long-term while being conceptually hard to distinguish from vote choice (Budge et al, 2010). Besides, the examination of German Election Study data from 1972 to 2009 by Dalton (2014) as well as the analysis of SOEP panel data from 1992 to 2009 by Dassonneville et al. (2012) revealed a considerable decline of partisanship in Germany in the course of the past decades until 2009.

Kai Arzheimer (2017) acknowledges the previous decline in the Germans' party identification. However, his analysis of German Longitudinal Election Study (GLES) data from 2013 reveals that the decrease in party identification has lately halted in Germany. Using a Conditional Logit Model (CLM), Arzheimer's (2017) analysis yields that party identification is still a very strong predictor for the German citizens' vote choice, while issue orientations and candidate orientations played a minor role for the Germans' vote choices in 2013 (Arzheimer, 2017). Overall, despite previous findings about declining partisan ties in Germany and other Western countries in the past, the recent study by Arzheimer (2017) and the determined gap in literature substantiate the

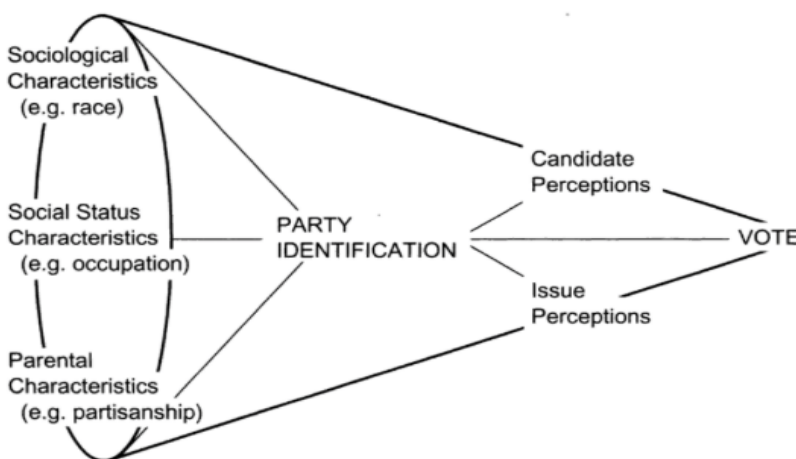
relevance to investigate the Aussiedler's party identification and determinants thereof in Germany today.

In order to gain theoretical insights for building the theoretical model for this research on Aussiedler, in the following prominent theories on electoral behavior with a particular focus on assumptions about party identification and its sources are examined.

## 2.4. The Concept of Party Identification and Determinants

**2.4.1. The Funnel of Causality from the Michigan Model.** When it comes to research that involves the investigation of party identification, it is essential to consider the classical works by the American scholar Angus Campbell and his colleagues, who are known as the founding fathers of the term of party identification and the Michigan model, presenting a popular theoretical socio-psychological framework for the explanation of electoral choice. In their frequently quoted books *The Voter Decides* (1954) and *The American Voter* (1960), the scholars distinguish between short-term and long-term influences, which ultimately yield a particular vote choice. Thus, they created the metaphor of the “Funnel of causality” (Campbell et al. 1960, p.1), which axis shall present a time dimension.

Figure 2.1: The Funnel of causality



Source: Maisel & Buckley (2005, p.91), derived from *The American Voter* (1960)



First, the *sociological, social status* and *parental characteristics*, which are situated at the funnel's opening (Figure 2.1), were determined to have a long-term impact on the individual's vote choice, as these factors reflect one's (early) socialization process. These three characteristics are particularly relevant and are examined in the following research as they have been found to significantly affect the individual's party identification. Party identification in turn was identified as an important long-term and stable predictor of a person's vote choice (Campbell et al, 1954). In accordance with this argumentation, the political scientist Russell J. Dalton defines party identification as "a long-term, affective attachment to one's preferred political party" (Dalton, 2016, p.1). Its long-term impact and stability is rooted in its potential to "structure a person's view of the political world, provide cues for judging political phenomena, influence patterns of political participation, and promote stability in individual voting behaviour" (ibid.). Thus, similar to Campbell and his colleagues, Dalton (2016) argues that the identification with a particular party affects the individual's attitude concerning various societal events and political decisions. Hence, party identification presents a comparably stable indicator for the impending election choice, which is rather resistant to external influences that might alter the election preferences due to the tendency towards politically biased perceptions in favor of the party one identifies with.

Overall, the long-term influence of party identification is not seen as the only determinant of electoral choice by Campbell and his colleagues (1960) who also identify two short-term influencing factors that might moderate the influence of party identification on a person's voter choice. One of the determined short-term forces is *issue orientation*, which on the one hand applies especially to individual voters, who have not taken over the parental party preference but for whom "questions of governmental policy are of paramount importance" (Campbell et al, 1954, p.112). Those people do not attach as much importance to the candidates' characteristics but vote for a party mainly due to its positions on particular issues that are important to the voter. On the other hand, among those who did usually identify with a particular party, in the case of being involved in a certain issue on a very personal level and consequently attaching increased importance to impending governmental actions, the individual would also likely decide based on the concerned party's position on the respective issue (Campbell et al, 1954). In case the party position differs significantly from one's own personal interest, despite of an initial long-term party identification, the short-term issue orientation might alter the individual's vote choice.

Furthermore, Campbell and his colleagues identify *candidate orientation* as the second short-term influencing factor, which is termed as “the structuring of political events in terms of a personal attraction to the major personalities involved” (Campbell et al, 1954, p. 136). In this context, the scholars speak of an individual’s “personal involvement with the candidates” (ibid.), which, similarly as issue orientation, might alter the person’s preference for a particular party, and thus the impact of one’s (initial) party identification on the actual vote in the short term.

However, as this research aims to investigate potential determinants for the Aussiedler’s party identification due to the aforementioned reasons, the following study does not include the two short-term predictors for the respondents’ vote choice but focuses on the investigation of the different mentioned personal characteristics’ impact on party identification, as the endogenous variable of this research.

The first three hypotheses that are empirically tested in the frame of this study are thus constructed in consideration of the sources of party identification from the Michigan model.

**2.4.2. The Impact of the Personal Environment’s Party Identification.** The analysis of American electoral data from 1948 and 1952 by Campbell and his colleagues yields that the individual develops the identification with a particular party, inter alia as a consequence of the person’s personal environment. The researchers identify similarities of the respondents’ party identification with their parents’ party identification. Additionally, it is found that the spouse’s and to some extent also the friends’ and work associates’ party preferences would match the individual’s party identification (Campbell et al., 1954). Concerning the topicality these findings and their applicability to the German context, a recent study by Quandt and Ohr (2011a) found that the social environment indeed has a significant impact on the individual’s party identification in Germany today. The results of that study yield that the predominant identification with one particular party in a person’s social environment significantly increases the probability that the individual has the same party identification (Quandt & Ohr, 2011a). Therefore, the first hypothesis of this research reads:

*The Russian-German individual is likely to have the same party identification as the majority of his/her family members, friends and acquaintances. [H1]*

Following from this hypothesis, the two underlying assumptions that focus on CDU and AfD identification will be tested in the frame of this study:

*Aussiedler, whose family members, friends and acquaintances predominantly identify with the CDU, identify with the CDU as well. [H1a]*

*Aussiedler, whose family members, friends and acquaintances predominantly identify with the AfD, identify with the AfD as well. [H1b]*

**2.4.3. The Impact of Sociological Factors on Party Identification.** Under the category of *sociological characteristics*, Campbell and his colleagues (1960) found age, gender, race, home region and religion to have a significant impact on the people's party identification. While the research at hand enquires most of these characteristics as control variables, which might potentially have an impact on the individual's party identification, a particular emphasis is put on the examination of religion, and more concretely on religiosity.

Campbell et al. (1960) for instance found Catholics to identify to a large extent with the Democratic Party in the United States. Overall, the religion variable has for decades played an important role in electoral research internationally as it depicts the religious cleavage in society. In past research, religiosity has oftentimes been operationalized and measured with the "frequency of church attendance" (Pappi, 2015, p. 122) and one's religious confession (ibid.).

In Germany, given that the Christian Democratic Union descended from the Centre Party, the CDU has historically been identified with mostly by religious people and in particular by Catholics (Ibid.). However, research on party identification in Germany has so far not yielded any results on how or whether German citizens identifying with the AfD differ from other party identifiers regarding their religion. In this context, only a research by Schoen and Weßels (2016) analysing data from the German Longitudinal Election Study (GLES) for the German federal election results of 2013 referred to the AfD by including it in the other parties-category. Schoen and Weßels (2016) found that those Germans who preferred the CDU/CSU in 2013 indicated a considerably higher rate of church attendance (of once a week or more) compared to all other parties including the other parties-category. Based on that finding, the following research investigates religiosity measured through church attendance frequency as potential determinant of party identification under the hypothesis that

*Aussiedler, who more frequently attend church, are more likely to prefer the CDU/CSU than the AfD. [H2]*

After all, comparably higher levels of church attendance might also be significantly related to a CDU party identification as religiosity is a particularly salient issue to the CDU/CSU. According to salience theory, political parties vary in the emphasis they put on particular policy issues, which in turn would make the citizens associate particular issues as “owned” (Dolezal et al., 2004, p.70) by a certain political party. Although in its recent election program from April 2017 the AfD also praised the German traditional family image (AfD, 2017, p.41), the issue of religiosity and Christian values is all along most encompassingly enshrined in the Christian Democratic Party’s ideology, as already reflected in its name. Also in its recent government program, the CDU/CSU group in the German Bundestag emphasizes the importance of a Christian conception of man (CDU/CSU, 2017, p. 7) and of the religious faith, churches and religious groups (ibid., p. 72) in our society. Their program depicts the Judaeo-Christian heritage (ibid., p. 73) as an important foundation for the German culture and the CDU professes to continuously support the work of the churches in Germany (CDU/CSU, 2017). All in all, the government program created for the last federal election reflects the CDU/CSU fraction’s thematic focus on religiosity and the Christian traditions. This sustained focus supports the argument that (regular) Russian-German worshippers are most likely to identify with the Christian Democrats in Germany.

**2.4.4. The Impact of Socioeconomic Characteristics on Party Identification.** Using the level of income, education and occupational status being used as indicators for their respondents’ *socioeconomic characteristics*, Campbell and his colleagues (1960) found a significant relation between the citizens’ socioeconomic status and their preference for a particular party in the US Presidential elections of 1948 and 1952 (Campbell et al., 1960; Campbell et al., 1954). As depicted in Figure 2.2, the analysis of the American election results by Campbell and his colleagues (1954) yields that citizens with the highest levels of educational attainment (college graduates), occupational position (professional and managerial as well as white collar occupation) and income (proportional increase) would mostly identify with the Republicans. Thus, the three socioeconomic characteristics were found to significantly affect party identification and a high socioeconomic status was found particularly related to the party identification with the Republicans.

Figure 2.2: Relation between socioeconomic factors and party preferences in the American presidential elections 1948 and 1952

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC	VOTED FOR:			TOTAL VOTING	DID NOT VOTE, BUT PREFERRED:		
	Republican	Democratic	Other†		Republican	Democratic	Other‡
EDUCATION							
1952							
Grade school	31%	30	1	62%	15%	18	5
High school	46%	34	*	80%	9%	10	1
College	65%	24	1	90%	6%	4	—
1948							
Grade school	16%	35	4	55%	6%	30	9
High school	29%	34	4	67%	6%	21	6
College	54%	17	8	79%	4%	13	4
OCCUPATION OF HEAD OF FAMILY							
1952							
Professional and managerial	59%	27	2	88%	7%	5	—
Other white collar	52%	28	1	81%	9%	9	1
Skilled and semi-skilled	34%	39	1	74%	11%	13	2
Unskilled	19%	40	1	60%	12%	23	5
Farm operators	42%	24	1	67%	17%	11	5
1948							
Professional and managerial	58%	14	3	75%	7%	14	4
Other white collar	38%	38	5	81%	7%	9	3
Skilled and semi-skilled	15%	52	4	71%	5%	21	3
INCOME							
1952							
Under \$2,000	30%	23	*	53%	17%	22	8
\$2,000—2,999	36%	31	1	68%	13%	15	4
\$3,000—3,999	40%	35	1	76%	11%	12	1
\$4,000—4,999	41%	41	1	83%	8%	8	1
\$5,000 and over	59%	28	1	88%	6%	6	*
1948							
Under \$2,000	16%	28	2	46%	8%	35	11
\$2,000—2,999	17%	38	6	61%	6%	28	5
\$3,000—3,999	35%	34	5	74%	3%	18	5
\$4,000—4,999	36%	33	6	75%	5%	14	6
\$5,000 and over	53%	25	4	82%	4%	7	7

Source: *The Voter Decides* (1954, pp. 72-73)

Reasons for this correlation between a person's socioeconomic status and his/her party identification were already given by the economist Anthony Downs:

The three socioeconomic characteristics examined by Campbell and his colleagues had already been identified as crucial predictors of voting behaviour and partisanship by Anthony Downs in *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957). According to Downs (1957), party preferences differ between the socioeconomic strata because the political parties would either pursue low-income or high-income interests and thereby also the interests of different labor groups. As counterpart to the term of the *homo economicus*, the economist thus developed the concept of the *homo politicus*, depicting the “rational citizen” (Downs, 1957, p.7) as the average voter. Downs notes

that altruism in the sense of socially rational behaviour which “benefits others even though it harms them personally” (ibid., p. 27) may well exist. However, in politics as in economics, except for the case of prevailing uncertainty and a lack of information, the individual, after making “cost-benefit calculations” (Verba et al, 1995, p. 524), is generally inclined to behave selfish in voting for the party, whose aims fit to the own self-interest linked to one’s position in society (ibid.). In this context, in their works from 1954 and 1960, Campbell and his colleagues also found evidence for the popular assumption by Lazarsfeld and his colleagues that a “person thinks, politically, as he is socially. Social characteristics determine political preference” (Lazarsfeld et al., 1948, p.27; Campbell et al, 1954, p.85).

In line with these classic assumptions about the significant impact of the individual’s socioeconomic circumstances on his/her political preferences, the already mentioned research findings by Brenke and Kritikos (2017) yields regarding the German party landscape that the AfD is mostly identified with by low-waged workers and employees with middle-ranked degrees. High-income employees with higher vocational qualifications were found more likely to identify with the CDU (ibid.). Building on these findings, this research examines empirically the hypothesis that

*The Aussiedler with comparably higher levels of socioeconomic characteristics are more likely to identify with the CDU than with the AfD [H3].*

Before investigating the three formulated hypotheses empirically, aside from the classical works *The Voter Decides* (1954) and *The American Voter* (1960), it is important to furthermore consider more recent research, which addresses party identification.

## **2.5. Extension of the Funnel of Causality in The New American Voter (1996)**

Despite the great value of the Michigan model in election research, *The New American Voter* (1996), which was written by J. Merrill Shanks and by Warren E. Miller, who had also co-authored *The Voter Decides* (1954) and *The American Voter* (1960), includes an extension of the Funnel of causality.

This revision was inter alia motivated by a significant historical change in American electoral behaviour, which started in the 1960s. In the face of the Vietnam war and the Civil Rights Movement, a generational change occurred in so far as the party identification rates dropped significantly from 1952 to 1964 on a national scale (Miller & Shanks, 1996). Simultaneously, an enduring realignment of party identifications was identified among the southern white voters as the post-New Deal generation started to support the Republicans to a large extent while the New Deal generation had mainly voted for the Democrats (Miller, 1992).

Thus, Miller and Shanks (1996) developed a new multi-stage scheme, for which greater explanatory power with regard to the development and the preservation of political preferences was found. In their book *The New American Voter* (1996), the authors argue that each of the six stages in their scheme is causally related to the respective next stage and thus, altogether, the stages yield the vote choice. The scholars begin with the stage of 1) *Stable Social and Economic Characteristics*, which leads to a person's 2) *Party Identification and Policy-Related Predispositions*. Afterwards, 3) *Current Policy Preferences and Perceptions of Current Conditions* play a major role and are followed by 4) *Retrospective Evaluations of the President Concerning Governmental "Results"*. Ultimately, also 5) *Impressions of the Candidates' Personal Qualities* in the sense of candidate orientation, which term was previously framed by Campbell and his colleagues, as well as 6) *Prospective Evaluations of the Candidates and the Parties* enable to predict an individual's imminent vote choice (Miller & Shanks, 1996, p.192). According to Miller and Shanks (1996), among those stages only the social and economic characteristics as well as party identification and policy-related predispositions, in the sense of ideological convictions, present long-term influencing factors in comparison to the rest of short-term forces.

As to the social and economic factors, the two scholars include questions in their study about the respondents' "ethnicity, gender, age, religion, marital status, level of education, employment status, family income, social class, union membership, region of the country in which they live in" (Miller & Shanks, 1996, p. 8) as frequently enquired personal characteristics in electoral research. This first stage of the scholars' hierarchical scheme resembles the first dimension of the funnel of causality, which likewise considers the voter's societal as well as socioeconomic characteristics. For the following study in particular the hypothesis from the *The American Voter* (1960) is valuable that "*the higher the identification of the individual with the group, the higher the probability that he will think and behave in ways which distinguish*

*members of his group from non-members*” (p.307). In relation to the following research, this assumption implies that it is important to consider the degree to which the Russian-German repatriates identify with their identity as Aussiedler. However, the classical works by Campbell and his colleagues only distinguish between white and black American citizens under the race variable and find that white citizens identify more strongly with the Republican Party (Campbell et al, 1960). In contrast, Miller and Shanks (1996) explicitly examine differences in party identification among citizens with different *ethnic backgrounds*. Thereby, they find that Americans with a Hispanic background identify more strongly with the Democratic Party. Uhlaner and Garcia (2005) describe this ethnic group’s dominant party identification as a result of the Democrats’ governmental programs in support of the Hispanic minorities.

## **2.6. Ideology as Party Identification Predictor and Ethnic Identification Control**

After all, the hierarchical multi-stage model by Miller and Shanks (1996) presents a grounded extension of the Michigan model. However, while the Michigan and the multi-stage model treat party identification as one of multiple indicators for vote choice, this research will examine party identification as endogenous variable. Thus, concerning the two models, this study mainly builds on the opening dimension of the funnel of causality and on the first two stages of the hierarchical model.

Concerning sociological characteristics that likely affect party identification, both *The American Voter* (1960) and *New American Voter* (1996) refer to the importance to consider race and ethnicity, respectively. However, additional literature in the field of party identification such as the work by Abraham H. Miller on *Ethnicity and Party Identification* (1974) further points to the specific importance of *ethnic identification*, without which the impact of ethnicity on party identification would be diminished. Yuet W. Cheung offers a pertinent distinction between the concepts of race, ethnicity and ethnic identification. The scholar argues that race would mainly refer to varying physical characteristics such as different skin color, while it would not cover ethnic cultural patterns. Further, ethnicity would indicate a person’s descent with indicators such as country of birth, cultural origin or mother tongue. In contrast, the concept of ethnic identification is found to reflect the person’s actual “psychological attachment to an ethnic group



or heritage” (Cheung, 2009, p.1216) in the sense of positive feelings about the own ethnic background (ibid).

Drawing on the findings by Dancygier and Saunders (2006), who found a significant impact of ethnic identification on party identification among ethnic minority members, the level of ethnic identification among the respondents is chosen to be enquired in the frame of this study. However, the group of Aussiedler in general was for decades considered to identify mostly with the CDU but no previous research results exists about the link between the people’s degree of identification with their ethnic background and their party identification. Hence, the following research does not examine the connection between these two variables based on a hypothesis but exploratively.

Concerning underlying reasons why Aussiedler have for many years identified most strongly with the CDU, the argument is frequently used that the party’s Christian-conservative ideology has met the Aussiedler’s historically incited values of prioritizing their Christian faith, the family and German traditions (Tietze, 2008; FOCUS, 2017). Coming back to the work by Miller and Shanks (1996), by *policy-related predispositions*, which are situated on the second stage of the hierarchical model, the authors mean the voter’s ideology, “the system of political belief [...] that ordinary citizens espouse” (Miller & Shanks, 1996, p.121), which is measured in orientation on the political spectrum as the “voters’ general self-identification as liberal, moderate, or conservative” (p.283). Thus, in contrast to the popular works by Campbell and his colleagues from 1954 and 1960, Miller and Shanks (1996) newly consider the potential impact of the self-identified ideological disposition of the voter. However, Shanks and Miller (1996) do not treat the individual's ideological disposition as a determinant for party identification. Instead, they put it on the same stage as the latter to cause the vote choice as they argue that not all party identifiers would also be “political ideologues” (p. 121).

However, later studies conducted in the United States, such as by Smith (1999), reveal a stable and significant one-directional impact of political ideology on party identification, which would mean that once a person commits to a particular political ideology, this considerably affects the individual's identification with the party fitting this ideology. Concluding from this research finding, it is possible to argue against the assumption by Miller and Shanks (1996) that although not all identifiers have to share the party’s ideology, ideological convictions, if existent, still have a considerable effect on the person’s party identification.

Apart from the American context, ideological convictions present particularly important potential determinants of party identification in the case of the Aussiedler as so far, already for a considerable period, their party identification has been considered to be mainly motivated by ideological considerations. Thus, as a modification to the Michigan model and the multi-stage model, besides controlling for ethnic identification, the following research newly includes ideological convictions as potential predictors for the Aussiedler's party identification. This modification is not only undertaken due to the assumption from previous research about a significant impact of the people's ideological orientation on their party identification, but there are also concrete indications that Aussiedler might have changed their party identification for ideological reasons.

But before addressing the Aussiedler's ideological convictions and the link to the people's party identification empirically, firstly the ideological stance as well as classification of the AfD in comparison to the other parties in the German Bundestag, and particularly the CDU, are addressed.

## **2.7. Party Ideologies of CDU and AfD**

**2.7.1. The Concept of Nationalism.** When referring to the ideological characteristics of the AfD, the *Alternative für Deutschland* is generally called a right-wing populist party in the German media. Apart from these public statements, also multiple scientific studies found evidence for this assumption. In the frame of their empirical study from 2016, Lewandowsky, Giebler and Wagner for instance compared the positions of the parties, which competed in the German federal election in 2013. In comparison to the other parties, the scholars ultimately found that the AfD would hold rather Eurosceptic as well as right-wing populist views (Lewandowsky et al, 2016).

However, the following study primarily aims to investigate the issue of party identification and factors that influence it while not opting for a party ideology analysis. Thus, for the comparison of respective ideological orientation of CDU and AfD identifiers as potential determinants of party identification, this study does not use the concept of populism. Instead, nationalism, as a scientifically more neutral concept, which is also oftentimes identified as an integral part of the AfD's ideology (Von Altenbockum, 2016; Löffler, 2017; Leggewie, 2017), serves to compare the Aussiedler's different ideological convictions.

Concerning the Germans' ideological identification with the AfD in general, a research by Niedermayer and Hofrichter (2016) reveals that many people from the AfD electorate are protest voters and that among those a considerable number do not elect the AfD for ideological reasons. At this point, protest voters would simultaneously not identify with the AfD but rather vote for it as an act of protest. Otherwise, the researchers conclude from their respondents' ratings on a nationalism scale, that people who indeed agree to a high extent with nationalist values that are part of the AfD's ideology, especially regarding the attitude of hostility towards foreigners (Niedermayer and Hofrichter, 2016), likely identify with this party.

Regarding the definition of the concept, nationalism is defined as "ideology based on the premise that the individual's loyalty and devotion to the nation-state surpass other individual or group interests" (Kohn, n.d.). Thus, Aussiedler with a distinctively nationalist attitude would be expected to express pride and loyalty towards Germany and about their German identity to a large extent. Furthermore, the own nation and the German people would be prioritized while "artificially imposing outsider status on any unwanted group, thus excluding them from social and citizenship benefits" (Freeden, 1998, p. 756).

Concerning the ideological comparison of AfD and CDU identifiers, both parties represent right-wing ideologies (Lewandowsky et al., 2016). This similarity makes it rather difficult to find an ideological dimension, on which both parties differ and which, at the same time, enables a conscious distinction of both parties by the Aussiedler.

Besides the issue of religiosity, which this study enquires as a separate predictor, being salient to the CDU, a variety of studies such as by Niedermayer and Hofrichter (2016) and a majority of German media identify nationalist ideas as an integral part of the AfD, while the CDU publicly distances itself from nationalism (Vates, 2017). This notion about the AfD's inclination to a German nationalism is substantiated by the content of the AfD's program for this year's federal election. There, the party frequently uses the term "national" and praises the German national identity, explicitly stating the importance to maintain the sovereign German nation state and declaring itself in favor of a reintroduction of a national German currency (AfD, 2017).

Additionally, political authorities in the AfD publicly identify nationalism as a characteristic of their party and assume this ideological inclination to be one important reason for the German Aussiedler to identify with the Alternative für Deutschland: Given this group's historical background and the discrimination which they had to face in the former Soviet Union, many Aussiedler maintained their traditional German values and the German identity along with a

pronounced sense of nationality (Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland, 2017a). Among the German parties, the AfD would take up most encompassingly these values and thinking (Heinrich, 2017).

Thus, all in all, under the overarching fourth hypothesis that Aussiedler, *who share the ideological ideas of the AfD, are more likely to identify with the AfD*. [H4], this research examines nationalism as ideological conviction with the hypothesis that

*The more Aussiedler approve of nationalist ideas, the more likely they identify with the AfD instead of the CDU*. [H4a]

**2.7.2. The Concept of Euroscepticism.** Besides nationalism, a wide range of scholars have also identified Euroscepticism as a central ideological stance, which the AfD would stand for (Lewandowsky et al., 2016; Lewandowsky, 2015; Plehwe & Schlögl, 2014). In general, the concept of Euroscepticism denotes “a negative stance towards European integration” (Arzheimer, 2015, p. 537). The term of European integration itself means the “process whereby policies are increasingly shaped and set at the European level and impact on national governments and wider society” (McGowan, 2007, p. 2). According to Arzheimer (2015), the AfD’s rejection of the currency union, of bailouts and of the idea of a federal EU-structure are indicators for the party’s Eurosceptic attitude. Similarly, Grimm (2015) finds that the AfD particularly criticizes the fiscal and monetary policies of the EU also for the break of the “no bailout clause”. Besides, the AfD is found to claim the Euro has led to political as well as economic tensions for instance through the split of Europe “into donor and debtor countries” (Grimm, 2015, p. 265).

Most recently, the AfD’s disapproval of the European Union and the European integration is reflected in its election program of 2017. There, the party criticizes the EU’s legal framework for infringing the country’s sovereignty with its border regime. Also, the AfD declares itself in favor of the autonomy of the European nations and depicts the EU as a burden, imposing unnecessary restrictions on the states. Ultimately, the statement that Germany needs to pull out of the European Union as it is today, as only a loose confederation of sovereign states instead of a union of states would be acceptable (AfD, 2017), underlines the party’s pronounced Euroscepticism.

In contrast, the CDU/CSU emphasizes the great value of the European Union and the European identity in their government program of 2017 (CDU/CSU, 2017). After all, the “pro-

European position” (Grimm, 2015, p. 265) of the German Christian Democrats already dates back to the beginnings of the European Union, the first chancellor of the Federal German Republic, Konrad Adenauer being known as one of the European Union’s founding fathers (European Union, 2017).

Thus, Euroscepticism as an issue, which is found particularly salient to the AfD, presents a suitable concept to distinguish between the ideological stances of the AfD and the CDU/CSU or other German political parties. Hence, similarly as for the religiosity predictor variable, based on the concept of issue ownership (Dolezal et al, 2014), the following research tests the assumption that the respondents sharing the Eurosceptic and nationalist attitude, which the AfD stands for, are most likely to identify politically with the AfD. Thus, the final hypothesis, which is tested in the frame of this research, reads:

*The more Aussiedler identify with a Eurosceptic stance, the more likely they identify with the AfD instead of the CDU. [H4b]*

## **2.8. Explanation of Association between Party Identification and Ideological Relation**

As stated above, AfD politicians, similarly as a variety of German media, assume that their party would be increasingly identified with and supported by the German repatriates inter alia because the AfD stands for many traditional national values, which the majority of Aussiedler have been endorsing all along. At this point, the question arises why many Aussiedler just recently started to identify with the AfD, while the group of Russian-German repatriates was previously considered to identify to a high extent with the CDU. After all, as already elaborated, the CDU stands likewise for a traditional conservative ideology. Aside from the fact that the AfD was established just a few years ago, in 2013, the political developments in Europe and the German society might explain many Aussiedler’s shift in party identification in combination with their ideological predispositions. Some of them will be elaborated on below:

**2.8.1. Prevalent Dissatisfaction with the German Asylum Policy.** Nowadays, Germany is accommodating a high number (1.5 millions in April 2016) of asylum seekers, who mainly came from the crisis area Syria as well as from other southern countries (Geiger

& Kürschner, 2016). However, the refugee influx, which mainly started in 2015, is increasingly bothering the German population due to the fear that the mass of arriving refugees might be related to terrorist attacks, a variety of criminal offences and impending economic disadvantages for the local people (Lutz, 2016; Horn, 2016). Simultaneously, Germany's chancellor Angela Merkel has been blamed for her asylum policy by the German public as they claim it has to a large extent caused the refugee crisis. While consequently the Christian Democrats lost support, the AfD, as a newly created party, took up the people's anger and worries, which are considered as an important source for the party's recent political success in the country (Höcherl, 2016).

**2.8.2. Fear and Negative Emotions as a Potential Cause for Anti-Establishment Party Support.** A study by Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris from 2017 evaluating data from the European Social Survey for 31 European countries yields important results regarding the underlying reasons for the increasing support for anti-establishment parties throughout Europe in recent years. In their reflection paper from 2017, they summarize concisely that besides economic concerns, the people's increasing support for populist parties throughout Europe is caused by fear. Today, all over Europe, in particular the "older generation, the less-educated, men, the religious [...] that hold traditional cultural values" (Inglehart & Norris, 2017, p.446) is found to fear the loss of their national identity and familiar traditional values, particularly in the face of the current influx of foreigners and refugees from the southern countries (ibid.; Sadigh, 2017). Similarly, a nationally representative experiment, which was conducted in 2008 by Brader and his colleagues, revealed for the United States that many Americans, while misinformed about immigration and influenceable by the mass media, hold considerably more anxiety as well as other negative emotions towards Latino than European immigrants. Such negative emotions in turn affect their opinion and political behavior (Brader et al., 2008).

Ultimately, a very recent representative study by Pokorny (2018), published by Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in the end of May 2018 and based on data collected between the end of 2017 and February 2018, investigates the impact of emotions on the party identification in Germany. Most strikingly, the research findings yield that most German citizens who have great misgivings about the current political situation in Germany and are afraid of what the future holds are attached to the AfD, while CDU identifiers are considerably more optimistic about the country's future and capacity to face future challenges (Pokorny, 2018).

**2.8.3. Possible Ideological Realignment among Aussiedler.** In the case of the Russian-German repatriates, evidence from the recent years shows that similarly as for a considerable amount of native-born Germans, many Aussiedler's pessimistic attitudes and worries about Germany's future have arisen from the refugee influx (Glas, 2016). More than fear, the immanent reason is forwarded that after their arrival in Germany, the Russian-Germans themselves had prevalingly not been indulged with the privileges the asylum seekers encounter today. On a large scale, the Aussiedler had to work hard for their desired living circumstances and integration into German society. Thus, particularly when being confronted with information that asylum seekers are avoidably committing crimes in Germany, it is difficult for the German repatriates to comprehend or endorse Germany's current asylum policy (Gruber, 2016). An example for such an occurrence was the in the beginning of 2016 publicly communicated information that a 13-year-old Aussiedler child had supposedly been abused by refugees, which took groups of Russian-Germans to the streets to demonstrate against the refugees (Beitzer, 2016).

Furthermore, dissatisfaction with the Christian Democratic government arose among a considerable amount of Aussiedler also for economic reasons. While the government's welfare policy allegedly benefits the arriving asylum seekers to a high extent, its integration and pension policy could not prevent that many Aussiedler, who had obtained a high degree in their birth country, nowadays work in low-wage sectors and many Russian-German seniors suffer from poverty (Heinrich, 2017).

All in all, due to their historical background, a majority of Aussiedler have preserved their traditional German values and conservative attitudes, which are still highly important to the Russian-German families (Mader, 2016). With reference to the CDU's and AfD's recent election programs, which were addressed above, this ideological predisposition would basically fit both parties. But whereas the Aussiedler mainly used to identify with the CDU over decades, according to Miller and Shanks (1996) who evaluated the large-scale party identification in America a few decades ago, "cataclysmic events of national scope and extended temporal duration may entirely reshape the national parameters of party identification" (Miller & Shanks, 1996, p.132). Although Miller's works are based on data collected from the United States decades ago, the causal structure can be taken over for the current political situation in German. Thus, given the increased support for the AfD, it is imaginable that the refugee influx and the

Aussiedler's dissatisfaction with the government's asylum and welfare policy reinforced the ethnic Germans' ideological attitude towards more pronounced traditional and nationalist values. Simultaneously, the AfD signalizes to the Aussiedler that it most encompassingly takes up their conservative German values as well as their dissatisfaction about the government's actions (Heinrich, 2017).

Hence, in order to examine in how far the Aussiedler's current ideological disposition affects their party identification, the degree of the respondents' approval of nationalist and Eurosceptic statements is also enquired in the frame of this study.

### **III. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1. Research Design and Strategy**

A special feature of this research is that it is comparative. The following analysis of the collected empirical data particularly focuses on comparing the determinants for the identification with the AfD and the CDU for topicality reasons. Thus, a cross-sectional instead of a longitudinal research is conducted. According to C.J. Mann, the particular value of such cross-sectional studies, for which the measurements on the respondents of one particular group are taken at the same time, is that they "are the best way to determine prevalence and are useful at identifying associations" (Mann, 2003, p.57). In science, which seeks conclusions that describe the reality of issues and events as accurate as possible, it is never possible to include all of the relevant variables. Hence, the claim of this research is not to determine causality, meaning factors that under any circumstances will yield a particular party identification. However, the chosen research design could enable to draw conclusions about the correlation of the different listed factors with the Aussiedler's party identification and thus the likelihood of a particular party attachment under certain circumstances.

The results from this investigation might be used as a starting point for future research on the wider German population. The public opinion in Germany and scientific results imply that the party identification for the AfD has been increasing among the Aussiedler. But overall, the Aussiedler appear to reflect the political attitude of the average German. The developments all



over Germany, including a variety of previous elections on federal state level (Nier, 2017) after which the AfD is currently represented in 14 German state parliaments, indicate that not only short-term emotions but rather long-term party affinity seems to develop and underlie the continuously increasing support for the AfD among Germans (Kroh & Fetz, 2016). Ultimately, the study results could be possibly used to understand the mechanisms behind changing or deviating party identifications in other European countries.

After all, a quantitative approach was chosen for the empirical study as it appears most suitable to answer the formulated research question that involves a great variety of independent variables. Quantitative research enables a large-N study, yielding a considerable amount of reliable numerical data and therefore findings, which are more generalizable to the greater population of Aussiedler than a few qualitative interview results (Steckler et al., 1992). Furthermore, as the collected data is being evaluated statistically, the analysis likely yields profound statistical results regarding the investigated relationships. Concurrently, objectivity is safeguarded and biased results are limited. After all, statistical data analysis by nature limits the room for subjective interpretations (Carr, 1994).

### **3.2. Data Collection Method**

An online-survey, with the questions and instructions being written in German<sup>3</sup>, was created on the University of Twente's LimeSurvey Server Platform and was used to collect the empirical data for this study from February 21 to March 31, 2018. To facilitate the use and distribution of the online survey, no tokens, in the sense of individually generated links to the survey for each participant, were utilized. Instead, one uniform link was being forwarded while the survey settings were set to prevent a repeated participation in the survey after having submitted the answers. Overall, the empirical data was collected anonymously.

As the vast majority of the German population uses the Internet (87 percent) (DESTATIS, 2016), the online-survey presents a fortunate means to reach a great variety of respondents. As only 55 percent of those who were 65 or older make use of the Internet, the group of Aussiedler aged 65 or older might be underrepresented in the final research results

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<sup>3</sup> Particularly the elder Aussiedler might not be able to read in English. Besides, questions in German can be generally expected as more understandable for respondents than a foreign language. This might in turn increase the response rate to the survey.

(ibid.). Moreover, a study conducted by Darren Hudson and his colleagues from 2004 on responsiveness to Internet surveys found no evidence for unit nonresponse bias for Internet-surveys (Hudson et al., 2004). This finding suggests that Internet surveys are an appropriate alternative for mail surveys, yielding comparably high response rates. Further to this, the easy manageable and less time-consuming electronic survey is likely to motivate a considerably higher number of Aussiedler to participate in the study than a hard copy document, which would have to be distributed individually to the people interested to participate in the research.

Ultimately, further to email distribution, the associations spread the link to the online-survey also via the social media platforms Facebook, Odnoklassniki and Whatsapp in order to reach a wider range of potential research participants.<sup>4</sup> The US-American social media services Facebook and Whatsapp are particularly used in the Western countries. In contrast, Odnoklassniki, with its server being located in Russia, mainly targets Russian-speaking individuals from all over the world and is particularly popular among the German Aussiedler population (Hepp et al, 2009).

### **3.3. Approach of Aussiedler**

In order to reach as many Aussiedler as possible, a wide range of associations and networks from all over Germany, which have Aussiedler as their target group, were contacted with a request to the association leaders to forward the link to the online-survey, the data collection instrument of this study, to their respective association members. This approach to target the association members as potential research participants does ensure that the vast majority has indeed an Aussiedler background.

Overall, 13 associations and networks from all over Germany participated in the distribution of the link to the online-survey.<sup>5</sup>

For the aim to compare particularly the determinants of party identification between CDU and AfD sympathizer, this study also involves two networks that are distinctively related to respectively the AfD and the CDU, presenting the only party-related Aussiedler networks in Germany. Thus, the North Rhine-Westphalian “Netzwerk Aussiedler und Russlanddeutsche in

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<sup>4</sup> For more information concerning the distribution channels of the online-survey link see APPENDIX, Table I.

<sup>5</sup> For further details, please see APPENDIX, Table 1

der Partei Alternative für Deutschland” (Network Aussiedler and Russian-Germans in the AfD), established in 2016 (Habichtsborg, 2016), and “Netzwerk Aussiedler in der CDU” (Network Aussiedler of the CDU), which was constituted in May 2015 (CDU, 2015) and is currently active in six Bundesländer <sup>6</sup> supported this study by publishing the survey-link on social media platforms (APPENDIX, Table I). Although the two networks, which were respectively established by the AfD and by the CDU, do not presuppose a membership in their party for the possibility to become a network member, members of the two networks can yet be expected to rather identify to a large extent with the respective establishing party. After all, the network by the AfD names as one of its aims to promote the membership in its party (Habichtsborg, 2016). Similarly, the CDU platform aims to achieve a regular information exchange and discourse with the ethnic German repatriates, which should encourage the Aussiedler to become party members, while enhancing the CDU’s Aussiedler policies (CDU, n.d.).

Besides the two party-related networks also the “Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland (LMDR)” on federal level, as well as its branch in North Rhine-Westphalia and its youth organization forwarded the survey link to their association members and published it on their Facebook association page. The Landsmannschaft as a whole, having Russian-German members all over Germany, was mainly created in 1950 for the aim to foster the Russian-Germans’ integration into German society, to consult and support the Aussiedler and to facilitate family reunifications while standing up for human rights (Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland, 2017b). Moreover, the “integration house” Lyra e.V., which has set as one of its main aims to foster the integration of Russian-German repatriates and is mainly active in Berlin-Lichtenberg (Lyra e.V., 2016) supported this study by publishing the survey link on Facebook. Furthermore, the board of VIRA e.V., the North-Rhine Westphalian association for the integration of Russian-German repatriates established in 2004 (VIRA e.V., n.d.), forwarded the invitation to the survey via email to their network members.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Netzwerk Aussiedler in der CDU’ is currently active in North-Rhine Westphalia, Baden Württemberg, Hessen, Hamburg, Berlin and Rheinland-Pfalz. Its branches in North-Rhine Westphalia, Baden Württemberg and Rheinland-Pfalz participated in this research. Online-Newspaper articles reveal that also the AfD’s Aussiedler Network has constituted branches in some other Bundesländer. However, the contact data of those was not found.

<sup>7</sup> VIRA e.V. currently forms a network of about 300 members, who predominantly have an Aussiedler background and of whom many are members in a variety of religious and charitable associations, LMDR or Network Aussiedler in the CDU. In contrast to Landsmannschaft, besides individual persons also whole associations can be members of VIRA e.V.

Furthermore, the participation of “Jugend- und Studentenring der Deutschen aus Russland” (JSDR e.V.) and “Deutsche Jugend aus Russland” (DJR e.V.) in this study enabled to additionally reach a multitude of young Russian-Germans. Also, the “Museum für Russlanddeutsche Kulturgeschichte” (*Museum for Russian-German Cultural History*), which is located in the German city of Detmold and which presents the biggest German museum for the Aussiedler history, published the invitation to the online-survey on their Facebook page, thereby reaching association members, friends and partners of the museum.

These associations were not created as specialized organizations of any party so that their members’ participation in the survey enriches the study with party identifications, which can be considered as independent from any party impact regarding the establishment background and possible political undertones.

Another argument to approach the networks and civic associations for research participants is that previous research has found that the membership in civic associations is positively correlated with political participation (Li & Zhang, 2017). As already outlined, political participation is in turn strongly related to party identification in the European context (Budge et al., 2010). Thus, in particular in the German context, this finding means that the respondents who are network and association members are likely to be politically active and thus to identify with a particular party. Especially in the case of the networks, respectively created by the CDU and AfD, the argument may be forwarded that members are not obliged but still are more likely to identify with the party having created the particular network. Otherwise, a considerable number of Aussiedler might have also become network members because of a prior political identification with the particular establishing party.

Overall, the purposive inclusion of the networks and the associations, which target the group of Aussiedler, enables to collect data specifically on the group of Russian-German repatriates while allowing to enquire party identification information from most respondents as it appears more likely among civic association members that they identify with some political party. Moreover, the possibility to participate in the study is not only restricted to Russian-German association members. As the survey link was publicly published on the different social media platforms, also Aussiedler, who are not members of any Russian-German association, participated in the study.

### 3.4. Sampling Method

When collecting the empirical data for this study on the Russian-German population in Germany, it was not feasible to “give all the individuals in the population equal chances of being selected” (Explorable, 2009). An entirely randomized selection of Russian-German participants would have required a census study on this group of ethnic Germans, which comprises about 3.2 million German citizens. Thus, non-probability sampling was used, which offers “a limited potential to generalize from the sample to the wider population” (Tansey, 2007, p.769) compared to probability sampling. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that this study’s final results do not enable to draw generalizable conclusions about the whole Aussiedler population in Germany. Nonetheless, due to the use of elements of consecutive sampling in combination with elements of purposive sampling, the results of this study are still to some extent representative beyond the studied sample in the realm of non-probability sampling.

First, a wide range of networks and associations from different fields targeting Aussiedler from all over Germany, with and without party ties, were contacted via telephone, email and social media. The thirteen associations, which agreed to participate, then spread the survey-link via email and via the mentioned social-media platforms, reaching ten thousands of Russian-German repatriates living all over Germany. Thus, due to the purposive spread of the survey-link through the associations, to a certain extent purposive sampling was used, “where the study’s purpose and the researcher’s knowledge of the population guide the process” (Tansey, 2007, p.770) and a “pre-defined and visible set of actors” (ibid.) is targeted. This way, it was possible to specifically reach German citizens with an Aussiedler background.

Moreover, the participating associations also have subscribers on their social media platforms and Aussiedler in their mailing lists, who are not members of their respective association. As these non-members had the equal chance to participate in the survey, the research results, which are inter alia also based on data collected from non-members, reveal insights, which do not refer exclusively to Russian-German association members. All in all, several Russian-German associations were contacted all over Germany with the request to spread the survey-link, which reached a large amount of Aussiedler and the participation in the online-survey was not restricted to Aussiedler with particular characteristics. Therefore, to a certain extent also

consecutive sampling, aiming for the inclusion of all “accessible subjects as part of the sample” (Explorable, 2009), was applied. This sampling type is considered to yield the most representative results for the entirety of the population among the non-probability sampling techniques due to a low selection bias. Despite not being generalizable to all German Aussiedler, the results of this study yield valuable insights, which are worth being tested as potential determinants of the wider Aussiedler population’s party identification in Germany in the frame of further research.

### 3.5. Operationalization

The operationalization step in scientific works is defined as “the process of strictly defining variables into measurable factors [...] to be measured, empirically and quantitatively” (Shuttleworth, 2017). Thus, in the following, the dependent variable as well as the explanatory variables of this research, as already conceptualized above, are operationalized by presenting the scales and indicators that are used to measure the variables.<sup>8</sup>

**3.5.1. Measuring Party Identification.** In order to measure party identification, the endogenous variable of this research, a valid and reliable item is applied, which has been used frequently in German surveys since the 1970s to measure the party identification among German citizens (Ohr & Quandt, 2011a; Mayer, 2016). This question translates:

In Germany, many people identify for a longer period with a particular political party, although they also elect a different party from time to time. How about you: Do you identify - generally speaking - with a particular political party? If yes, which one? (Johann, 2009, p. 446).

This two-part question has proven demonstrably applicable to enquire the concept of party identification in the German context (Mayer, 2016) while it is similar to the question by Campbell and his colleagues, who had asked their respondents “Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?”<sup>9</sup> (Campbell et al., 1960, p. 122).

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<sup>8</sup> A document-version of the online survey and details about survey question formulation can be found in the APPENDIX, section XIII.

<sup>9</sup> The discussed or reused items, which were originally used in English, are presented in quotation marks while the English translations of German items are displayed without quotation marks in accordance with APA style guidelines (APA Style Blog, 2014).

In order to avoid response fatigue, this research does not apply the two-part German question as two separate questions as has been done in the work by Ohr and Quandt (2011a). Instead, similarly as in a variety of past German research (Johann, 2009; Zeh, 2005), the questions are used as one item and posed together in the frame of this study. Besides, similarly as in Johann's study (2009) on the Germans' electoral participation during the German federal election in 2005, instead of all 42 German parties that lately candidated, only the six parties that were elected in the Bundestag in September 2017 are listed as answering options besides identifying with another party or no party. Thus, the answering options newly include the AfD.

As in the works by Campbell and his colleagues (1960) and by Quandt and Ohr (2011a), Johann's (2009) respondents additionally had to indicate the strength of their party attachment. This question, which is also taken over as it very much matches the party identification literature while having been validated for the German context, translates: All in all, how strong or weak is your identification with this party? (Johann, 2009, p. 446). This question, applied with the original 5-point-scale answer options of very strong, rather strong, moderate, rather weak and very weak enables to identify the strength of the respondents' party identification.

**3.5.2. Measuring Party identification of the Personal Environment.** For the purpose to examine the impact of the personal environment's party identification, an item from the study on party identification by Ohr and Quandt (2011b) is reused, which asks for the party most of one's family members, friends and acquaintances identify with (Quandt & Ohr, 2011b). This item is applied to test the assumption by Campbell and his colleagues (1954) that the parents' party inclination but also the party preferences of one's wider personal environment significantly affects one's own party identification. Differently from the party identification variable, the answering category that one's personal environment mainly identifies with different parties is additionally included.

**3.5.3. Measuring Church Attendance Frequency.** This research does not investigate the respondents' religiosity in the sense of the people's religious faith as previous research did not find reasonable evidence for a considerable difference of religious beliefs between AfD and CDU voters. However, the following research tests the assumption, as stated for instance by Schoen and Weßels (2016), that an increased frequency of going to church increases the likelihood that the respective person identifies with the CDU/CSU.

Hence, to measure the impact of religiosity on the Aussiedler's party identification, an item for church attendance frequency from the German Longitudinal Election Study (GLES), originally used for the German federal election 2013, is reused. Its English version reads: "Generally, how frequently do you attend religious services - never, only once a year, more than once a year, at least once a month, two to three times a month, at least once a week, more than once a week?" (Rattinger et al., 2017a, p. 44). The answering categories of "Never", "Once a year", "Several times a year", "Once a month", "Two to three times a month", "Once a week" and "More often" from the original GLES 2013 are also reused<sup>10</sup>.

**3.5.4. Measuring Socioeconomic Characteristics.** Today, the three indicators educational attainment, occupational position and income level, which have been examined in a variety of electoral research, are still used universally in order to measure the socioeconomic status of a person (APA, 2017). The three categories of grade school, high school and college (see Figure 2.2) serve to measure educational level in the works by Campbell and his colleagues (1954). In contrast, German research typically distinguishes and uses both, school education as well as vocational training, as additive indicators for the respondent's educational attainment (Dulon et al., 2003; Lampert et al., 2013). Hence, the following research will enquire both educational attainment dimensions.

The two introductory questions and the answering options to measure school education and vocational training are taken over from an item catalogue of demographic characteristics by the German Federal Statistical Office (Statistisches Bundesamt, 1999; 2016<sup>11</sup>). Similarly, the survey question as well as the validated answering options for occupational status, which are based on the common occupational categories in Germany, will mainly be derived from the

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<sup>10</sup> The answer option of "Don't know" from the original study are dropped as the respondents are expected to only roughly estimate the frequency to prevent a lack of obtained data regarding the relationship between this religiosity variable and party identification.

<sup>11</sup> More recent versions of the demographic-standards-document by the Federal Statistical Office have already been published and the items from 1999 are adjusted with the new ones from 2016 regarding actuality. However, in order to prevent response fatigue as the newer document version includes more detailed questions with long answer catalogues, which were created for census inquiries in first place, this research will be mainly based on the concise items from 1999 (see APPENDIX, section II.).



catalogue by the Federal Statistical Office (1999) and adjusted with reference to the updated document by the Statistical Office from 2016.<sup>12</sup>

However, as the catalogue from the Federal Statistical Office was published in 1999 and thus does not include the Euro currency, the income categories starting with Less than 500 euros and ending with 8000 euros and more (Wittlif & Beigang, 2016, pp. 58-59) are derived from the already mentioned Integration Barometer 2016. However, the introductory question for this item will be retrieved from a German study on the employment of elderly people from 2008 (Büsch et al, 2011), as this question includes a more detailed explanation as to what the enquired monthly net household income is. Regarding income, the monthly net household income instead of the personal income is asked for, as the household income and not only the personal income significantly affect a person's socioeconomic situation (Dulon et al., 2003; Winkler & Stolzenberg, 1998).

**3.5.5. Measuring Nationalism.** In order to measure nationalism as potential ideological predictor of party identification, this research utilizes the nationalism scale by Siegfried Schumann (2003). Originally, the researcher used this scale in order to enquire the Germans' attitude regarding the introduction of the euro. Overall, the scale was chosen as in the frame of the study by Schumann (2003) it proved valid and reliable to enquire nationalist attitudes among the German people without any judgmental assessment in the direction of right-wing extremism. For this nationalism scale, Schumann (2003) reused two indicators, which have been validated and frequently used by Jürgen Falter since 1994 in order to enquire nationalism.

These two indicators, which deal with national pride as well as courage for national sentiments translate: I am proud to be German; We should regain courage for a strong national feeling (Schumann, 2013, p. 248). The three other indicators, which deal with scepticism against

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<sup>12</sup> However, in contrast to the answer options by the statistical office where the expression -am/was- (ibid., p. 35) is used, the respondents will only be asked for their present occupation and not for their past occupation. Particularly, in the case of the Aussiedler, the past occupation could be easily confused with the respondent's previous occupation in the birth country of the former Soviet Union. However, this research does explicitly not seek to enquire such occupation information as it would not pertain to the individual's current socioeconomic status in Germany. Thus, in order to additionally cover the respondents' economic situation, who are not yet or not anymore employed, the answer option -Not employed- (Federal Statistical Office, 1999, p.20) is added to the item. Additionally, the item enquiring employment status from the catalogue, which lists besides the answer option of being -Employed- the reasons for not possessing any occupational position of being a -Student, pensioner, unemployed, housewife/-husband, permanently unable to work- and -Other- (Federal Statistical Office, 1999, p.45) are used to gain additional information on the respondents' employment situation in case the answers indicated for the other socioeconomic variables appear not conclusive enough.

foreigners and are reused from the original scale read: The influx of refugees should be impeded in the future; The Federal republic has become non-German to a dangerous degree because of its many resident foreigners and Foreigners should generally choose their spouses from their own people (ibid). With these three items, the nationalism scale that was composed by Siegfried Schumann also includes indicators, which refer to the people's scepticism and negative attitude towards foreigners. As mentioned above, previous research found that these types of emotions significantly affect the people's political attitudes. A 5-point Likert-scale from strongly disagreeing (1) to agreeing completely (5) is utilized for the answering options of the nationalism indicators.<sup>13</sup>

**3.5.6. Measuring Euroscepticism.** As mentioned above, the AfD claims to be highly critical of the European Union, while the CDU expressly espouses the idea of European integration. Thus, the concept of Euroscepticism presents both an appropriate and important concept besides nationalism to compare the impact of the Aussiedler's ideological disposition on their party identification, particularly for the focused comparison between CDU and AfD identification.

Hence, to enquire the respondents' attitude towards the European Union, the validated EU support index (Theißen, 2015, p.98) was converted into a Euroscepticism scale by rescaling the answering options from highly positive (1) to highly negative (5). At first, the respondent is asked to indicate his/her opinion about: A1) The European Union as Economic and Monetary Union, which has a single currency, the euro; A2) The Common Foreign Policy of the 27 Member States; A3) A future enlargement of the EU; A4) The Common Defense and Security Policy of the EU Member States (ibid.) Second, the respondent is asked to rate Germany's membership in the European Union and afterwards which image the European Union invokes in him/her.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> In order to enable rather precise answers for these items, instead of the original answering options of -True- and -False- (Schumann, 2013, p. 248), the following study uses a 5-point Likert-scale from strongly disagreeing to agreeing completely. Thus, also the introductory text, which was introduced by Falter in his work in 1994 and used in many later works (Falter et al., 2013), is reused in the following study. This introduction translates: In this block, you find a set of statements, which some people agree with and others refuse. How about you? (Falter et al., 2013, p. 428).

<sup>14</sup> The original index asks for the indication of approval or disapproval (two answering options) for the first question, for a positive, negative or neutral answer for the second question and five answering options besides -Don't know- are given for the first question. In order to facilitate the following data analysis, all of the answering options are aligned in the frame of this research. Hence, similarly as the original answering options for the third question, on a 5-point scale, the respondents are able to indicate whether they have a highly positive, rather positive, neither positive nor negative, rather negative or highly negative attitude for all of the three questions. For this index, again the answering option of not knowing is dropped as the respondents are able to indicate neither positive nor negative if they are not sure.

This index is particularly applicable to the chosen research topic at hand as it addresses essentially the issue of crisis perception. As already mentioned, critical attitudes regarding the refugee crisis, the fear of a of national identity loss as well as economic concerns have been considered but not yet proven as important reasons for increasing support for the AfD among the Aussiedler. Hence, the use of this scale enables to investigate in how far the Aussiedler's are sceptic of the EU and whether this significantly affects their party identification.

**3.5.7. Demographic Variables.** As the first two demographic variables, which are frequently used in electoral research, the following research enquires age, gender and home region (Bundesland). The survey items for these three variables are also derived from the validated Integration Barometer from 2016 (Wittlif & Beigang, 2016, p.33). Also, given the focus of this research, this study includes questions to verify the respondents' Aussiedler background. These questions are mainly based on the Integration Barometer from 2016 as this validated research instrument was designed for the interrogation of Germans with a migration background, such as the Aussiedler.

First, the respondent is asked whether he/she or his parents were acknowledged as Aussiedler (Wittlif & Beigang, 2016, p. 37). In order to verify and gain additional information about the respondent's Aussiedler background, he/she is asked to indicate his/her birth country. In contrast to the answering categories in the Integration Barometer, due to the given research focus, only Germany and the former Soviet Union countries are listed as answering options besides the other country option to be filled in manually. A question follows to enquire the year when the respondent came to live in Germany. This question matters when respondents indicate a former Soviet Union country as their birth country. For those respondents who were born in Germany, the question for the Russian-German parent(s)' birth country informs about the respondent's Aussiedler background (see APPENDIX, section XIII).<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Regarding the age of the research participants, this research also involves Aussiedler children and grandchildren, who were born in Germany, as according to Campbell and his colleagues, the family environment has a considerable impact on a person's party identification. In this context, the young people might also identify with the Aussiedler identity as well as with their parents' party identification, which is to be examined. Still, for the possibility of a scientific distinction, all research participants are asked to indicate their country of birth as well as for how long they have been living in Germany. As this research mainly deals with the Aussiedler' party identification, this study aims for research respondents who have already reached the voting age of 18. As official federal condition for the participation in the German federal election, this age is considered to reflect the individual's maturity regarding the personal political will formation.

Moreover, to enquire the respondents' membership in Russian-German association(s), an already existing item is reused, asking which of the following listed associations and networks they are member of (Kloke, 2013, p.304). The following contacted associations and networks are listed: Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland e.V., Netzwerk Russlanddeutsche, Aussiedler und Spätaussiedler für die AfD, Jugendorganisation der Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland (JSDR e.V.), Netzwerk Aussiedler in der CDU, Lyra e.V., Freundschaft-Druschba e.V. Multiple answers are possible, and the membership in another, not listed Russian-German association could be added manually (APPENDIX, section XIII).

Furthermore, to determine the level of ethnic identification among the research respondents, to which extent they feel rather as Aussiedler or as German, the item from Dancygier's and Saunders' research on partisanship among immigrants and natives (2006) is reused. The two scholars used five answering options to enquire whether their respondents think of themselves as rather British or rather as a member of his/her ethnic group (Dancygier & Saunders, 2006; Jowell et al., 2000). For the following research, instead of (1) "British, not [ethnic group of respondent]" to (5) "[ethnic group of respondent], not British" (Dancygier & Saunders, 2006, p.980) the answers were changed to range from thinking of oneself as German, not as Aussiedler to thinking of oneself as Aussiedler, not as German.

Moreover, to investigate more encompassingly the respondent's ethnic identity while controlling whether an Aussiedler background is significantly related to a particular party identification, this study includes a three-part item that asks for the ethnic identity of the respondent's family, friends and acquaintances. The three separate statements, which enquire the ethnic composition of the personal environment translate: My family members/friends/acquaintances are a) mainly Germans b) partly Germans, and partly Aussiedler c) mainly Aussiedler. While this three-part item was originally constructed for this study, it builds on the question about the personal environment's party identification by Ohr and Quandt (2011b), which also distinguishes between the three dimensions of the respondent's personal environment. Furthermore, this item is substantially related to the ethnic identification variable. However, it includes only the three answering options as it was constructed on the basis of the work by Titzmann and his colleagues from 2016, which examining the degree of interethnic ties, called "homophily" (Titzmann et al, 2016, p. 1077), among ethnic minority mothers in Germany and Israel. In this study from 2016, "mothers reported for each of their social contacts whether that person was from their own minority group or not" (Titzmann et al, 2016, p. 1081). Likewise, in

consideration of “interactional mechanisms” (Syed & Juan, 2012, p.1505), the ethnic background of the respondent’s environment enquired in the following serves as another indicator for the respondents’ ethnic identity.

Finally, given the assumed strong connection between party identification and electoral behaviour, a question follows about the respondents’ electoral choice during the last German federal election in 2017. This question and answering options are based on an item from the German Longitudinal Electoral Studies survey of 2009 (Rattinger et al, 2017c). In the following research, it serves as a backup to control for the respondents’ political preferences in case that no party identification has been indicated.

At the end of the survey the respondents have the possibility to leave any additional remarks about their party identification or questions regarding the survey. This open question enables to find out about any difficulties the respondents perceived when filling in the survey or about aspects that could be additionally addressed in future research.

## **IV. Data analysis**

For the analysis of the quantitative data from the online-survey, the statistical analysis software SPSS Statistics 25.0 is used. Besides the inspection of descriptive statistics, first, association measures are evaluated and second, the Student's t-test as well as the Mann-Whitney U-test are applied. These bivariate inferential analysis techniques enable to determine strengths of association and whether the respondents identifying with the CDU or AfD differ significantly concerning their personal characteristics and ideological predispositions<sup>16</sup>. Ultimately, a multinomial logistic regression is conducted, testing the impact of the predictor variables found relevant in the previous analysis steps on the outcome variable.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Different bivariate analysis techniques are attributed depending on the scaling level of each predictor variable.

<sup>17</sup> Multinomial logistic regression is ultimately conducted because it enables on the one hand, similarly as binary logistic regression, to inquire in how far the inquired potential sources are related to the party identification with the CDU or the AfD. On the other hand, multinomial logistic regression additionally enables to contextualize these results by also considering the personal characteristics’ connection to the identification with other political parties. This additional comparison has the potential to strengthen the assumptions that particular characteristics are distinctively related to the party identification with the CDU or the AfD.

## 4.1. Introductory Descriptive Statistics

Overall, 313 participants have completed the survey, while 298 (95.2%) indicated having an Aussiedler background. Among those 15 participants, who do not have an Aussiedler background, the majority indicated to be “Vertriebene(r)” (expellee) or “Heimkehrer” (repatriates).<sup>18</sup> As Aussiedler were chosen as the units of observation of this study, only the data obtained from the 298 Aussiedler respondents could be considered for the statistical analysis. Concerning sociodemographic characteristics, a relative majority of the respondents was male (53 percent). The respondents’ age ranged from 18 to 75, while the age group of 31 to 45 is most strongly represented (41.6%), the average age being 42. Moreover, the respondents indicated to live for 2 to 45, and on average for 25, years in Germany. While Aussiedler from each of the German Bundesländer participated, most respondents are from North Rhine-Westphalia (29.9%), Bavaria (19.1%), Baden-Württemberg (15.4%), Hesse (8.1%) and Lower Saxony (8.1%). As to the respondents’ birth country, most were born in Kazakhstan (41.3%) or Russia (39.6%), while 8.4 percent of the respondents were born in Germany.<sup>19</sup> Most respondents’ parents were reportedly born in Russia (48.7 %), Kazakhstan (30.2%) or Ukraine (10.1%).<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> There is a historical connection between the term “Aussiedler(in)” and “Vertriebene(r)” (expellee). Following from the German Federal Expellee Law, §1, (1), 1., expellees are those German citizens who had lived on Eastern German territory and who had been expelled from their homes under foreign administration during or in the aftermath of the Second World War. In total, after the Potsdam Protocoll had been concluded by the allies in August 1945, until 1948, 2 million East Prussians, 3 million Pomeranians, 4 million Silesians and 3 million Sudeten Germans were expelled from their homes and had to move to West Germany (ZDF-History, 2010). But also Aussiedler, who returned to Germany until the late 90s, received an Expellee identity document in the case that they could prove a flight-and-expulsion destiny (Panagiotidis, 2018). Many returning Aussiedler or their ancestors had indeed experienced such a destiny. After all, during World War I and World War II, the Aussiedler living on the territory of the former Soviet Union were seen as a threat by the Soviet authorities because they were related to the German enemies. Therefore, forced collectivization took place, hundred thousand ethnic German men were forced into “Trudarmee” (Soviet labour camps) and many others were deported further North, to Siberia, to Kyrgyzstan or Kazakhstan, while thousands died on the way (Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland, n.d.). Thus, besides the German expellees, who had lived on Eastern German territory, many Aussiedler were legally recognized as *Vertriebene* when they returned to Germany. In contrast, German citizens who were arrested by a foreign power due to military or military-like service during the Second World War have been recognized as “Heimkehrer” following from §3(2) Heimkehrerstiftungsgesetz (HKStG).

<sup>19</sup> The other respondents indicated having been born in Kyrgyzstan (4.7%), Tajikistan (2 %), Uzbekistan (2 %), Ukraine, Turkmenistan, Namibia and the former Soviet Union (no specification).

<sup>20</sup> The other indicated parent birth countries were Kyrgyzstan (2.3%), Tadjikistan (1.3%), Germany, Georgia, Belarus (each 1%), Azerbaijan, Latvia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The remaining 2.7 percent stressed that their parents were either born in different countries (e.g. Russia and Kazakhstan) or that they were explicitly born in the former Autonomous German Volga Republic, which is now located in the Russian Federation.

Regarding party identification, the exogenous variable of this study, which was inquired with mutually exclusive answering option categories, most respondents indicated to identify either with the AfD or the CDU as depicted in Table 4.1:

*Table 4.1: Frequency Distribution – Party Identification*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	AfD	102	34,2
	CDU/CSU	104	34,9
	SPD	26	8,7
	FDP	15	5,0
	Bündnis 90/Die Grünen	16	5,4
	Die Linke	22	7,4
	Other Party	2	,7
	No Party	11	3,7
	Total	298	100,0

These descriptive statistics do not indicate that all over Germany, Aussiedler identify most frequently with the two parties as this study is not representative for the whole Aussiedler population in Germany, as particularly association members and respectively a CDU - and an AfD - related network, as the only party-related Aussiedler networks in Germany, were targeted. This focus does not contradict this study's research aim, which is not to determine which party this group of ethnic Germans predominantly identifies with. Instead, the main target of this research is to identify underlying reasons for particular party identifications.<sup>21</sup>

Concerning the party identification strength, it appears usual that for most cases of respondents who indicated a particular party identification, the identification starts at the moderate level. However, while for the CDU, SPD and the Greens, most respondents indicate a *rather strong* party identification and the FDP as well as the Left party is mainly *moderately* identified

<sup>21</sup> The participation of a considerable number of members from respectively a CDU - and an AfD - related network and the fact that the AfD shared the survey-link in a group on Russian-German social media that is inclined to the AfD significantly contributed to the result of disproportionately many cases of CDU and AfD party identifications. Overall, 39 respondents indicated a membership in a AfD-related Aussiedler association, 29 indicated to be a member of a CDU-related Aussiedler association, 120 times the membership in some other Aussiedler association was indicated and 110 respondents are not member of any Russian-German association. While the respondents were able to indicate multiple Russian-German association memberships, no one indicated to be simultaneously a member of a AfD-related and CDU-related association.

with, the largest part of the AfD identifiers (42.2%) indicate to identify *very strongly* with the AfD.

*Table 4.2.: Frequency Distribution - Party Identification Strength*

	very weak	rather weak	moderate	rather strong	very strong	Total
AfD	0 0,0%	2 2,0%	21 20,6%	36 35,3%	43 42,2%	102 100,0%
CDU/CSU	2 1,9%	5 4,8%	41 39,4%	42 40,4%	14 13,5%	104 100,0%
SPD	1 3,8%	0 0,0%	11 42,3%	12 46,2%	2 7,7%	26 100,0%
FDP	1 6,7%	0 0,0%	10 66,7%	4 26,7%	0 0,0%	15 100,0%
Bündnis 90/Die Grünen	0 0,0%	1 6,3%	4 25,0%	9 56,3%	2 12,5%	16 100,0%
Die Linke	0 0,0%	1 4,5%	11 50,0%	9 40,9%	1 4,5%	22 100,0%
Other Party	0 0,0%	0 0,0%	1 50,0%	0 0,0%	1 50,0%	2 100,0%
No Party	2 18,2%	0 0,0%	6 54,5%	2 18,2%	1 9,1%	11 100,0%
Total	6 2,0%	9 3,0%	105 35,2%	114 38,3%	64 21,5%	298 100,0%

Given the large share of indicated party identifications with the CDU or AfD and following from this study's research hypotheses, the following analysis will particularly focus on comparing in how far the impact of the different inquired sources of party identification differs between CDU and AfD identification. In the second step, the results will be contrasted with the sources effects' on other party identifications through multinomial logistic regression.

So far, Table 4.2 already depicts that among the 104 concerned respondents, 39.4 percent identify moderately and 40.4 percent identify rather strongly with the CDU while 42.2 percent of the respondents, who are inclined to the AfD, have a very strong party identification<sup>22</sup>. After this first descriptive result, that Aussiedler who identify with the AfD indicate distinctively high levels of party identification strength, the following bivariate analyses and the subsequent multinomial logistic regression will reveal to what extent particular personal characteristics are significantly related to a particular party identification.

<sup>22</sup> For a graphic overview of the party identification strength distributions, please see APPENDIX Figure I.



## 4.2. Comparing Sources of AfD or CDU Party Identification with Descriptive and Inferential Bivariate Statistics

**4.2.1. Differences in Gender, Vocational Training, Occupation and Personal Environment.** Before conclusions can be drawn about the extent to which particular personal characteristics and predispositions are significantly related to a particular party identification among the investigated group of ethnic Germans, it is necessary to first look at the frequency distributions across the nominal predictor variables. Thus firstly, cross tabulations were created to compare the Aussiedler who are respectively inclined to the CDU or the AfD regarding their gender, vocational training, occupational status and their personal environment's predominant party identification<sup>23</sup>. Besides looking at the bivariate descriptive statistics, the nominal association measures *Phi* ( $\Phi$ )<sup>24</sup>, *Cramer's V* ( $\phi_c$ ) and *Lambda* ( $\lambda$ )<sup>25</sup> were computed in order to enquire these predictor variables' association with the two outcome categories, CDU or AfD identification.

*Gender and party identification.* In line with the findings by Brenke and Kritikos (2017), the data of this study reveal that more men than women identify with the AfD. Among the CDU identifiers, a slight majority of the respondents is female (57 percent), while two-thirds of the AfD identifiers (68 percent) are male<sup>26</sup>. The association between gender and party identification is significant but rather weak ( $\chi^2 = 12.38$  and  $\Phi = -0.25$ ;  $p < .001$ ). Hence, it is to be expected that other personal characteristics or predispositions are more strongly related to the party identification with the CDU or the AfD.

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<sup>23</sup> The variable of Russian-German association membership is excluded from the analysis due to a likely two-sided relationship. This variable cannot be treated as a predictor for party identification because the latter needs to be considered as a motive for the concerned association membership. For the frequency distribution and computed association measure, see APPENDIX, Table II.

<sup>24</sup> The association measure Phi, similarly as Cramer's V based on Chi-squared ( $\chi^2$ ), was used to enquire the association between the outcome variable and the dichotomous predictor variable gender.

<sup>25</sup> Throughout the analysis section, the Lambda values, which refer to party identification as endogenous variable, are uniformly used.

<sup>26</sup> The percent values refer to a total of 206 Aussiedler respondents of which 104 indicated to identify with the CDU/CSU and 102 others identify with the AfD.

*Table 4.3. Personal Environment's Party Attachment compared between CDU and AfD Identifiers*

		Party	Identification
		AfD	CDU
		(N= 102)	(N=104)
Party	AfD	78(76.5%)	3 (2.9%)
Identification	CDU/CSU	9 (8.8%)	61 (58.7%)
Personal Environment	SPD	1 (1.0%)	1 (1.0%)
	FDP	1 (1.0%)	0
	Bündnis 90/ Die Grünen	0	2 (1.9%)
	Die Linke	1 (1.0%)	1 (1.0%)
	Mostly different parties	12 (11.8%)	36 (34.6%)

*Note.*  $\chi^2 = 123.07$   $\Lambda = .75$   $p < .001$

As expected in relation to the assumptions from the Michigan model, most CDU and AfD identifiers' party identification equals their personal environment's party inclination, while for both identifier groups the second largest part of respondents indicates that their personal environment does not have a homogenous party identification (Table 4.3). Nonetheless, there is a significant ( $p < .001$ ) and very strong ( $\Lambda = .75$ ) connection between the Russian-Germans' personal environment's party identification and their own party identification with the CDU or the AfD.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Due to this very strong association, the predictor party Identification of the personal environment is excluded from the further analysis due to a high risk of tautology.

*Table 4.4. Occupational Status compared between Party Identifications (AfD - CDU)*

		Party	Identification
		AfD	CDU
		(N= 102)	(N=104)
Occupational status	Not employed	18 (17.6%)	24 (23.1%)
	Family worker	0	1(1.0%)
	Doing vocational training	3 (2.9%)	7 (6.7%)
	Worker	25 (24.5%)	9 (8.7%)
	Self-maintained employee	11 (10.8%)	3 (2.9%)
	Employee	36 (35.3%)	44 (42.3%)
	Academic in liberal profession	4 (3.9%)	10 (9.6%)
	Civil servant	5 (4.9%)	6 (5.8%)

*Note.*  $\chi^2=19.00$   $\Lambda=.24$   $p<.001$

In comparison, the occupational status is found to have a significant ( $p < .001$ ) but weak association ( $\Lambda=.24$ ) with the AfD or CDU party identification among Russian-German repatriates (Table 4.4). It is detectable that within both groups most of the identifiers are employees. Regarding the differences, workers and self-maintained employees identify more frequently with the AfD, while students, unemployed Russian-Germans and academics in liberal profession are on a larger scale inclined to the CDU instead of the AfD.

*Table 4.5. Vocational Training compared between Party Identifications (AfD - CDU)*

		Party	Identification
		AfD	CDU
		(N= 102)	(N=103)
Completed vocational training	In vocational training	9 (8.8%)	7 (6.8%)
	No vocational training	4 (3.9%)	4 (3.9%)
	Vocational-operational training	20 (19.6%)	9 (8.7%)
	Commercial/vocational school	10 (10.8%)	6 (5.8%)
	Technical college	13 (12.7%)	9 (8.7%)
	Polytechnic degree	18 (17.6%)	16 (15.5%)
	University degree	28 (27.5%)	52 (50.5%)

*Note.*  $\chi^2=13.46$   $\Lambda=.23$   $p<.05$

For vocational training and party identification with the CDU or the AfD, a moderately significant ( $p < .05$ ), weak association ( $\Lambda = .23$ ) is determined. While within both identifier groups, the relatively largest part possesses a university diploma, Aussiedler inclined to the AfD completed more frequently any lower vocational training other than university compared to the CDU identifiers (Table 4.5). Thus, the bivariate results preliminarily display a certain connection between the Aussiedler's socioeconomic characteristics and their party identification. However, the comparably weak associations point to the existence of stronger predictors for the people's party identification.

**4.2.2. Diverging Attitudes towards Euroscepticism and Nationalism.** To enquire in how far Russian-Germans, who respectively identify with the AfD or the CDU, differ in their attitudes towards Euroscepticism and nationalism, two Student's t-tests were conducted, testing whether differences between both groups of identifiers are significant<sup>28</sup>:

The t-tests show that the Russian-Germans who identify with the AfD report higher levels of agreement on the Euroscepticism items (mean = 3.67) than do those who identify with the CDU (mean = 2.28). This difference is statistically significant ( $t = 12.63$ ;  $p < .001$ ). Those who identify with the AfD also report higher levels of agreement with the nationalism items (mean = 4.11) than do those who identify with CDU (mean = 3.03). Also this difference is statistically significant ( $t = 10.87$ ;  $p < .001$ ).<sup>29</sup>

#### **4.2.3. Differences in Ethnic Identification, Education and Church Attendance.**

Regarding the remaining ordinal predictor variables of this study, the Mann-Whitney U test also enables to detect significant differences in personal characteristics: Firstly, although most Aussiedler inclined to the CDU or the AfD feel predominantly both as German and as Aussiedler, there are very significant differences ( $p < .001$ ) in ethnic identification between the two groups. As portrayed in the frequency values in Table 4.6, those Aussiedler who feel exclusively or more as

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<sup>28</sup> The differences on the continuous variable age were also tested for and found insignificant (see APPENDIX, Table III). A scale from the three inquired personal environment items was not included in the Student's t-test model due to a low level of Cronbach's alpha of .55, meaning that it is not internally consistent and reliable enough (Bland & Altman, 1997). The metric predictor variable of stay is also not included as its values are not normally distributed as its kurtosis z-value exceeds the benchmark of 3.29 (Kim, 2013). For an overview of the Cronbach's alpha values, see APPENDIX, Table section IV and for the respective kurtosis and skewness values Table V.

<sup>29</sup> The differences are quite robust if the subitems of the Euroscepticism scale and the nationalism scale are inspected using a Mann-Whitney U test. Only on the subitem "Proud to be German", a t-test reveal a significant difference between respondents who identify with the CDU or AfD. For a more detailed overview of the frequency distribution for this nationalism item and of the Mann-Whitney U test results for all remaining nationalism and Euroscepticism items, see APPENDIX, Table VI.

Germans, identify more frequently with the CDU, while those who feel more or exclusively as Aussiedler identify less frequently with the CDU than with the AfD.<sup>30</sup>

*Table 4.6. Comparison of Ethnic Identification between Aussiedler attached to AfD or CDU*

		Party	Identification	Mean rank (Mdn)		Sig. (p)
		AfD	CDU	AfD	CDU	
		(N= 102)	(N=104)			
Ethnic Identification	(1) German, not Aussiedler	12 (11.8%)	19 (18.3%)	115.82	91.42	*
	(2) More as German	16 (15.7%)	27 (26.0%)	(3)	(3)	
	(3) German and Aussiedler	51 (50.0%)	49 (47.1%)			
	(4) More as Aussiedler	11 (10.8%)	8 (7.7%)			
	(5) Aussiedler, not German	12 (11.8%)	1 (1.0%)			

*Note.* \*Mann-Whitney U test: significant at .001 level

For educational attainment, less pertinent but also significant ( $p < .01$ ) differences were determined between AfD and CDU identifiers. Looking at the frequency distributions (Table 4.7), those Aussiedler who obtained a secondary school certificate as their highest educational attainment identify more frequently with the AfD than with the CDU. Moreover, those who did their Abitur report to a larger extent to identify with the CDU than with the AfD, while among the Aussiedler attached to the AfD, the relatively largest share also possesses a general qualification for university entrance.

<sup>30</sup> In contrast, no significant differences were determined between both identifier groups regarding the ethnic background of their personal environment, their duration of stay in Germany or their net household income levels. For the frequency distributions and Mann-Whitney U test results, see APPENDIX, Tables VII and VIII.

Table 4.7. Comparison of Educational Attainment between Aussiedler attached to AfD or CDU

		Party	Identification	Mean rank (Mdn)		Sig. (p)
		AfD	CDU	AfD	CDU	
		(N= 100)	(N=101)			
Educational Attainment	(1) No basic qualification	1 (1.0%)	0	92.02	109.89	**
	(2) Basic qualification	0	2 (2.0%)	(5)	(6)	
	(3) Secondary school certificate	30 (30.0%)	13 (12.9%)			
	(4) Polytechnic secondary school	4 (4.0%)	6 (5.9%)			
	(5) Advanced technical college	23 (23.0%)	24 (23.8%)			
	(6) Abitur	42 (42.0%)	56 (55.4%)			

Note. \*\*Mann-Whitney U test, significant at .01 level

Ultimately, in accordance with the third research hypothesis, Aussiedler who identify with the AfD also report significantly different ( $p < .01$ ) church attendance frequencies from those who are attached to the CDU. As depicted in Table 4.8, in particular among those Russian-German individuals who never attend church, the large majority identifies with the AfD instead of the CDU.

Table 4.8. Church Attendance in comparison between CDU and AfD identifiers

		Party	Identification	Mean rank (Mdn)		Sig. (p)
		AfD	CDU	AfD	CDU	
		(N= 102)	(N=104)			
Church Attendance	(1) Never	38 (37.3%)	15 (14.4%)	92.95	113.85	**
	(2) Once a year	18 (17.6%)	26 (25.0%)	(2)	(3)	
	(3) Multiple times yearly	19 (18.6%)	32 (30.8%)			
	(4) Once a month	4 (3.9%)	2 (1.9%)			
	(5) 2-3 times a month	3 (2.9%)	8 (7.7%)			
	(6) Once a week	14 (13.7%)	10 (9.6%)			
	(7) More often	6 (5.9%)	11 (10.6%)			

Note. \*\*Mann-Whitney U test, significant at .01 level

### 4.3. Multinomial Logistic Regression

After having conducted the bivariate analyses, subsequently multinomial logistic regression enables to investigate the strength of the endogenous variables to predict the outcome variable of party identification. Thus, in the following, significant results will enable to predict under which circumstances (in the sense of characteristics and predispositions) individual Russian-German repatriates identify with a particular German political party. Moreover, multinomial logistic regression was chosen over binary logistic regression because the former allows a more in-depth analysis of the obtained empirical data. Hence, after focusing on the main study target to explore in how far different personal predispositions motivate Aussiedler who identify with the AfD or CDU, multinomial logistic regression additionally allows to contextualize these first results. The additional consideration of other Russian-German individuals' identifications with respectively one other political parties in the second step might increase the evidence on whether particular characteristics are distinctively related to the party identification with the CDU or the AfD. As Hosmer, Lemeshow and Strudivant note in their work on *Applied Logistic Regression* (2013), the aim of logistic regression, similarly as of any regression model, would be "to find the best fitting and most parsimonious model" (p.1) to describe the relationship between the outcome variable and the predictor variables of interest. In order to avoid overfitting errors, the predictor variables were confined through the previous significance tests<sup>31</sup>. Moreover, to find the multinomial logistic regression model of best fit, the predictor variables are entered in the model one by one. This modelling approach enables to compare the fit as well as explanatory power of the different models and additionally to trace any interaction effects between the predictor variables. Additionally, after testing the assumptions for multinomial logistic regression, a square transformation of the nationalism predictor is applied to ensure the validity of the model results.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Before entering the predictor variables in the logistic regression model that are chosen as a result from the previous analysis steps, they need to be carefully inspected at last. As Babyak (2004) emphasizes *overfitting*, which means including too many predictors in the model, is a prevalent problem in regression analysis, which increases the risk of spuriousness when variables, which are actually not associated, are found significantly related to the outcome variable due to the high number of predictors. Mohamad (2016) likewise appeals to cautiously choose and confine the predictors for multinomial logistic regression. Thus, in order to delimit the number of categorical predictors, as all categorical variables' categories are included in the logistic regression model as separate predictors, along with the frequency distributions, the categorical predictor variables church attendance (churchgoers/ non-churchgoers) and education (Abitur/ Abitur not obtained) are logically recoded into dichotomous variables, while ethnic identification is recoded into three categories ((Rather)German/ German as well as Aussiedler/ (Rather) Aussiedler).

<sup>32</sup> As the assumption of a linear relationship with the log transformation of the dependent variable is not met for the nationalism variable, it needed to be converted for multinomial logistic regression (see APPENDIX, section IX).

*Table 4.9. Multinomial Logit Models to compare the predictors of CDU and AfD identification (Odds ratio values for AfD as reference category and CDU as comparison category)*

		Model I	Model II	Model III	Model IV	Model V
Gender	Female (ref = Male)	2.76**	2.67*	2.41**	2.42***	2.46
Ethnic Identification	(Rather) as German	4.25**	3.64*	2.77***	0.98	3.41
	Both German and Aussiedler (ref. = (Rather) as Aussiedler)	2.50***	2.14	1.86	0.69	1.71
Church Attendance	Never going to church (ref. = Churchgoers)		0.32**	0.33**	0.27**	0.13*
Education	Abitur (ref. = No Abitur)			0.95	0.80	1.77
Vocational training	In vocational training			0.31	0.56	0.18
	No vocational training			0.58	0.67	0.66
	Vocational-operational training			0.33	0.52	0.35
	Commercial/vocational school					
	Technical college			0.41	1.02	1.27
	Polytechnic degree			0.53	0.62	0.44
	(ref. = University degree)			0.60	0.83	0.25
Occupation status	Not employed			0.96	0.74	0.51
	Family worker			1044445 <sup>33</sup>	130604	1584
	Doing vocational training			3.20	1.66	3.93
	Worker			0.39	0.30	0.14
	Self-maintained employee			0.28	0.22	0.15
	Employee			0.28	0.41	0.27
	Academic in liberal profession (ref. = Civil servant)			1.15	0.66	0.32
Euroscepticism	(continuous)				0.13*	0.18*
Nationalism <sup>2</sup>	(continuous)					0.71*
	N	298	298	296	296	296
	McFadden Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.06	.08	.20	.33	.42
	Goodness of fit <sup>34</sup>	52.98* (df 21)	75.84* (df 28)	186.38* (df 126)	312.39* (df 133)	393.92* (df 140)

Note. \*  $p < .001$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .05$

<sup>33</sup> The odds ratio values for the “family worker” category are extremely high and insignificant because no respondent identifying with the CDU has indicated this occupational status, which distorts the comparison on this category.

<sup>34</sup> Likelihood Ratio Chi-squared test



Table 4.9 depicted above shows the main five multinomial logistic regression models that were created to analyse in how far the investigated predictors are connected to CDU or AfD identification.<sup>35</sup>

As the results for **Model I** reveal, when only gender and ethnic identification are considered as predictors, the model's explanatory power is still very low (McFadden = .06), but both gender and ethnic identification are found significantly related to party identification.

When church attendance is added to the equation (**Model II**), all three predictors are still significantly related to the dichotomous party identification outcome variable, while the model's overall explanatory power slightly increases (McFadden = .08). Females are preliminarily found more likely <sup>36</sup>( $\exp(x) = 2.67$ ;  $p < .001$ ) than men to choose the CDU over the AfD<sup>37</sup>, similarly as churchgoers ( $\exp(x) = 0.32$ ;  $p < .01$ ) compared to the Aussiedler who never attend church. Also, the Russian-Germans who think of themselves (rather) as Germans are preliminarily found more likely to identify with the CDU<sup>38</sup> ( $\exp(x) = 3.64$ ;  $p < .001$ ) compared to those who (rather) feel as Aussiedler.

When the socioeconomic predictors are included (**Model III**), the explanatory power of the model considerably increases (McFadden = .20). While the coefficients and significance level of ethnic identification slightly decrease ( $p < .05$ ), all of the significant relationships found in the previous model are maintained. However, the most striking result from this model is that against the theoretical expectations, no socioeconomic predictor or category is significantly related to the party identification with the CDU or AfD.

A great difference to the previous models is perceptible when Euroscepticism is additionally entered. While the explanatory power of **Model IV** almost doubles (McFadden = .33), Euroscepticism is found very significantly related ( $p < .001$ ) to party identification. Simultaneously, ethnic identification loses its significant relationship to the outcome variable,

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<sup>35</sup> Concerning the modelling technique for the multinomial logistic regression, the eight predictor variables were added to the model one after the other, starting with gender, then adding ethnic identification (as the two remaining control variables), and continuing with the other predictor variables in the order of the study hypotheses. As the results do not significantly differ between the eight modelling steps, to present the findings more concisely, only the five models for each added sub-group are presented in accordance with the hypotheses.

<sup>36</sup> Throughout the multinomial logistic regression, this likelihood does not refer to the probability but to the odds that a particular group of Aussiedler identifies with the CDU instead of the AfD.

<sup>37</sup> Meaning that there is a higher chance that females will identify with the CDU.

<sup>38</sup> As the multinomial logit models treat AfD identification as reference category, the results throughout this analysis section contrast CDU with AfD party identification. For instance, females would be less likely to identify with the AfD than men and churchgoers less likely to identify with the AfD than Aussiedler who reportedly never go to church.

which may be indicative of a mediator effect. In an exploratory approach, using the Baron and Kenny (1986) method, the post-hoc hypothesis is established that Euroscepticism mediates the effect of ethnic identification on the dichotomous outcome variable. Following from the mediation analysis, exclusively for the comparison between CDU and AfD identifiers, it is expected that Aussiedler who predominantly think of themselves as Germans are comparably less Eurosceptic and thus are more likely to identify with the CDU instead of the AfD (see APPENDIX, section X). This hypothesis needs to be tested in the frame of future research.

Among the constructed multinomial logistic regression models, **Model V**, which includes all of the eight predictor variables, presents the model of best fit, because the whole predicts the outcome of the endogenous party identification variable significantly ( $\chi^2$  (df 140) = 393.92;  $p < .001$ ) and with the highest explanatory power (McFadden = .42).<sup>39</sup> While the whole final multinomial logistic regression contrasts AfD identification respectively to each of the seven other enquired party identification categories, Model V exclusively depicts the sub-analysis, which compares AfD and CDU party identification. This sub-model already enables to answer the research hypotheses that were previously formulated:

(1) Due to a high risk of tautology, the predictor variable of the personal environment's party identification was not included in the multinomial logistic regression model. In the context of comparing the determinants of CDU and AfD identification, this risk affirms the assumption that *the Russian-German individual is likely to have the same party identification as the majority of his/her family members, friends and acquaintances* (H1). Thus, an Aussiedler whose personal environment predominantly identifies with the AfD or the CDU will likely<sup>40</sup> have the same party identification (H1a and H1b). However, besides the confirmed first hypothesis (and the concomitant two sub-hypotheses), it is to be drawn from the evaluation of the frequency distributions for the two distinct groups of CDU and AfD identifiers that a not negligible share of both groups' personal environments do not have a homogenous party identification.

(2) Ultimately, the results from the final multinomial model confirm the tested assumption that *Aussiedler, who more frequently attend church, are more likely to prefer the CDU/CSU than the*

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<sup>39</sup> The Pseudo-R-square values are usually lower than r-square values from ordinary least squares regression but McFadden pseudo r-square values around .4 would already indicate "excellent fit" (p. 306, McFadden, 1979). The complete Pseudo R-square results are: Cox and Snell = .74; Nagelkerke = .77; McFadden = .42.

<sup>40</sup> The risk to predict the Russian-German's party identification falsely when his/her personal environment's predominant party identification is known, decreases to only 25.5% ( $\Delta = .75$ ).

*AfD* (H2). Concretely, it can be concluded as a highly significant result ( $p < .001$ ) that the odds<sup>41</sup> for Aussiedler who attend church to choose the CDU over the AfD are about 7 times as high ( $\text{ex}(p) = 0.13$ ) than for the Russian-Germans who never attend church<sup>42</sup>. Thus, churchgoers are found more likely to identify with the CDU while Aussiedler who never go to church rather identify with the AfD by comparison.

(3) Firstly, significant association values from the bivariate analysis pointed to the possibility that the party identification with the CDU or AfD could to some extent be attributed to the Russian-Germans' socioeconomic situation. Regarding the output of the final multinomial logistic regression model, however, no significant results are determined for any of the socioeconomic variables' strength to predict whether a Russian-German identifies with the AfD or CDU.<sup>43</sup> Hence, the research results do not enable to accept this study's third hypothesis that *Aussiedler with comparably higher levels of socioeconomic characteristics are more likely to identify with the CDU than with the AfD* (H3), which is thus rejected.

(4) Finally, the outcome of the multinomial logistic regression yields that the more the Russian-German repatriates agree with nationalist and Eurosceptic ideas, the more likely they will identify with the AfD instead of the CDU. Thus firstly, according to the final research findings, with a unit level increase on the Euroscepticism scale<sup>44</sup>, the Russian-German repatriate becomes about 5 times as likely ( $\text{ex}(p) = 0.18$ ) to identify with the AfD instead of the CDU<sup>45</sup>. Therefore, the results confirm the previously formulated assumption that *the more Aussiedler identify with a Eurosceptic stance, the more likely they identify with the AfD instead of the CDU* (H4b).

Moreover, the model shows a significant impact ( $p < .001$ ) of a nationalist attitude on the party identification of a Russian-German individual. For every unit level increase on the nationalism

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<sup>41</sup> This likelihood does not refer to the probability but to the odds that a particular group of Aussiedler will identify with the CDU instead of the AfD. The Factor of 7 is derived from dividing 0.87 (1-0.13) by the odds ratio value of .13 (odds for Aussiedler who reportedly never go to church to identify with the CDU instead of the AfD compared to churchgoers) from 1.

<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, the results do not enable to compare more distinctly in how far different churchgoing frequencies are related to a particular party identification among the group of Aussiedler in Germany.

<sup>43</sup> Also, the uncorrected model, which includes the original untransformed nationalism variable, does not show a significant impact of any socioeconomic characteristics category (see APPENDIX, Table XI a)).

<sup>44</sup> For Euroscepticism, a unit level increase means for example that, instead of having a neutral view (3) on all indicators, the Russian-German individual has averagely a rather negative (4) attitude towards all notions on the 5-point scale.

<sup>45</sup> Meaning that with a unit level increase on the Euroscepticism scale, the odds of the Russian-German identifying with the CDU instead of the AfD decrease to about 18 percent.

scale<sup>46</sup>, the chance that the Russian-German will identify with the CDU instead of the AfD decreases considerably<sup>47</sup>. Thus, also the assumption is affirmed that *the more Aussiedler approve of nationalist ideas, the more likely they identify with the AfD instead of the CDU* (H4a). The results from the previously conducted Mann-Whitney U test on all nationalism items reveal as only exception that the Aussiedler who identify either with the CDU or the AfD do not significantly differ but both feel similarly proud to be German.

Overall, the research results confirm the assumptions that the Russian-German repatriates' ideological convictions concerning nationalism and Euroscepticism, as well as the party affiliation of their personal background and their religiosity measured through church attendance frequency have a significant and substantial effect on whether the Russian-German individual identifies with the CDU or the AfD.<sup>48</sup> In order to contextualize these findings, it is valuable to draw comparisons between the sources of respectively CDU and AfD party identification and the characteristics as well as predispositions that are significantly related to the Russian-Germans' identification with other German political parties. The multinomial logistic regression results thereby enable to additionally compare which predispositions motivate the Aussiedler to identify with the SPD<sup>49</sup> instead of the AfD or CDU.

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<sup>46</sup> For the nationalism scale, a unit level increase would mean for instance that on the 5-point scale, instead of having a neutral opinion (3) on all indicators, the Russian-German individual averagely rather approves of all statements, which test to which extent the individual holds a nationalist view.

<sup>47</sup> Due to the square transformation, it is not possible to interpret the coefficients for the converted nationalism variable similarly as all other coefficients. At this point, it is only possible to say that a unit level increase on the nationalism scale decreases the likelihood to identify with the CDU due to the negative B- coefficient. However, the overall results of this final corrected model can be considered valid. Also, the fact that all significance values and the rest of the coefficients do not considerably differ between the original and the corrected final model certifies the robustness of the model in general. To compare with the original uncorrected model, see APPENDIX, Table XI a).

<sup>48</sup> As gender is found significantly related to the dichotomous party identification in all models before including nationalism, it could be suspected that nationalism mediates the effect of gender on the dichotomous outcome variable. However, as the nationalism variable needed to be transformed, this study does not test for this mediation effect.

<sup>49</sup> For multinomial logistic regression, the benchmark applies that only results, which are based on a minimum of 25 cases percategory, are valid and thus may be interpreted (Bungert, 2012).

Table 4.10.<sup>50</sup> Multinomial Logit Models to compare the sources of SPD, CDU and AfD identification (Odds ratio values for SPD identification as comparison category)

		Model VI	Model VII
	Reference category	AfD	CDU
Gender	Female (ref. = Male)	4.00 <sup>***</sup>	1.63
Ethnic Identification	(Rather) as German	0.39	0.12 <sup>***</sup>
	Both German and Aussiedler (ref. = (Rather) as Aussiedler)	1.22	0.72
Church Attendance	Never going to church (ref. = Churchgoers)	0.57	4.27 <sup>**</sup>
Education	No Abitur (ref. = Abitur)	0.80	0.46
Vocational training	In vocational training	0.42	2.37
	No vocational training	1.953E-6	2.951E-6
	Vocational-operational training	0.25	0.72
	Commercial/vocational school	1.470E-6	1.158E-6
	Technical college	0.75	1.69
	Polytechnic degree (ref. = University degree)	0.034 <sup>***</sup>	0.14
Occupation status	Not employed	1.07	2.09
	Doing vocational training	0.02	9.590E-6
	Family worker	4.57	1.16
	Worker	3.259E-6	1.298E-5
	Self-maintained	2.51	16.46
	Employee	1.33	5.00
	Academic in liberal profession (ref. = Civil servant)	0.41	1.29
Euroscepticism	(continuous)	0.11 <sup>*</sup>	0.64
Nationalism <sup>2</sup>	(continuous)	.72 <sup>*</sup>	1.01
	<i>N</i>	296	296
	McFadden Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.42	.42
	Goodness of fit <sup>51</sup>	393.92 <sup>*</sup> (df 140)	393.92 <sup>*</sup> (df 140)

Note. <sup>\*</sup>  $p < .001$  <sup>\*\*</sup>  $p < .01$  <sup>\*\*\*</sup>  $p < .05$

<sup>50</sup> The original models which include the uncorrected nationalism variable, can be found depicted in Table XI b) in the APPENDIX for comparison.

<sup>51</sup> Likelihood ratio chi-squared test

The final multinomial logistic regression *inter alia* also reveals under which circumstances Aussiedler would be more likely to identify with the SPD instead of the AfD (Table 4.10, **Model VI**). Relating thereto, the degree to which a Russian-German individual indicates a Eurosceptic or nationalist attitude is found to have a significant impact ( $p < .001$ ). Similarly as for the comparison between CDU and AfD identifiers, those Aussiedler who report a stronger approval of nationalist and Eurosceptic ideas, are more likely to identify with the AfD than the SPD. With every unit level increase on the Euroscepticism scale, it becomes about 8 times as likely ( $\text{ex}(p) = 0.11$ ) for the Russian-German individual to identify with the AfD instead of the SPD. Also concerning nationalism, a unit level increase decreases the chance that the Aussiedler will identify with the SPD and the individual is then rather expected to identify with the AfD<sup>52</sup>.

Hence, the overall results concerning ideological convictions as predictors for party identification yield that higher levels of Euroscepticism and nationalism significantly and substantially increase the likelihood of a Russian-German individual to identify with the AfD.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, gender and one category of vocational training are found to significantly affect whether an Aussiedler identifies with the AfD or SPD: The results show that females are four times as likely ( $\text{ex}(p) = 4.00$ ;  $p < .05$ ) to identify with the SPD compared to males. Those are in turn found more likely to identify with the AfD. Besides, Aussiedler who possess a polytechnic degree are found 28 times as likely to choose the AfD over the SPD compared to university graduates ( $\text{ex}(p) = 0.034$ ;  $p < .05$ ).<sup>54 55</sup>

In order to compare the sources of party identification between CDU and SPD identifiers, a new equivalent multinomial logistic regression model is computed with the same predictor variables but with CDU party identification as reference category. This presents equally a model of best fit since it yields the same pseudo r-squared (McFadden = .42) and model fitting significance values ( $\chi^2$  (df 140) = 393.92;  $p < .001$ ) as the previous regression model. As depicted in **Model VII** (Table 4.10), differently from the comparison between AfD and CDU

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<sup>52</sup> This is reflected in the negative B-coefficient.

<sup>53</sup> However, differently from the comparison of CDU and AfD identification, when Euroscepticism is not included in the model that compares AfD and SPD identification, ethnic identification does not have a significant effect (see Table XII). As SPD and AfD identifiers are not found to differ significantly regarding their ethnic identification, Euroscepticism only mediates the effect of ethnic identification when CDU and AfD identification are compared.

<sup>54</sup> The chance that Aussiedler who possess a polytechnic degree will identify with the SPD instead of the AfD decreases to 3.5 percent compared to university graduates. Thus, those Aussiedler who possess a polytechnic degree are much more likely to identify with the AfD (instead of the SPD) than university diploma holders.

<sup>55</sup> However, significance was only determined for this single vocational training category.

as well as AfD and SPD identification, instead of nationalism or Euroscepticism, ethnic identification plays a significant role ( $p < .05$ ) for whether an individual Aussiedler identifies with the CDU or SPD<sup>56</sup>. The results reveal that a Russian-German who identifies more as a German is about 7 times as likely ( $\exp(X) = 0.12$ ) to identify with the CDU compared to a Russian-German who rather thinks of him/herself as Aussiedler. Moreover, for the comparison between CDU and SPD identification, religiosity measured with church attendance frequency also plays a major significant ( $p < .01$ ) role. Those Aussiedler who never go to church are about 4 times ( $\exp(x) = 4.27$ ) as likely to identify with the SPD than the churchgoers. The latter would be more likely to identify with the CDU. Finally, for the comparison between these two party identifications, Euroscepticism and nationalism were not found significant.

Hence, it can be ultimately concluded that church attendance is a strong predictor for the identification with CDU while nationalist and Eurosceptic views present important indicators for the party identification with the AfD among Aussiedler.

## V. Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

This study has examined the research question *to what extent do the personal environment's party preferences, religiosity, socioeconomic characteristics and ideological convictions affect the party identification of the Aussiedler in Germany today?*

Ultimately, the research results enable to confirm the hypotheses about a significant impact of the personal environment's party identification, own ideological convictions and religiosity on the Aussiedler's current party identification. While the personal environment's party attachment was not included in the multinomial logit model due to the predictor's exceptionally strong significant association with the outcome variable, the determined high risk of tautology reveals a considerable impact of the personal environment's party attachment. Therefore,

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<sup>56</sup> The finding that Euroscepticism and nationalism do not significantly affect whether a Russian-German individual is more likely to identify with the SPD or the CDU, substantiates these issues to be particularly salient to the AfD and the identification with this party. The finding concerning ethnic identification shows that those Aussiedler who rather identify as a German are overwhelmingly most likely to identify with the CDU while feeling rather as Aussiedler is not found to be confined to AfD identification. Ultimately, only when comparing CDU and AfD identification, a mediation effect is perceptible: those Aussiedler who rather feel as Germans will more likely indicate lower levels of Euroscepticism and thus more likely identify with the CDU than with the AfD.

according to the results and in accordance with the findings by Campbell et al. (1954), the Russian-German individual, imbibing the party identification of the own personal environment, likely identifies with the CDU or the AfD when most of his/her personal environment identifies with the respective political party. The determined impact direction needs to be verified in the frame of future research beyond association measure values. As another predictor of political preferences from the Michigan model, this research finds religiosity, measured through church attendance, to be a crucial determinant for the identification with the CDU. In accordance with the second hypothesis of this research and past German research on religiosity and party preferences, Aussiedler who attend church are found to significantly more likely to identify with the CDU than with the SPD or AfD compared to Russian-Germans who reportedly do not attend church. It rests upon future research to additionally investigate potential differences in churchgoing frequencies among the different groups of Russian-German party identifiers as well as the impact of different confessions.

Overall, the findings partially verify the determinants of party preferences from the Michigan model for the German context and the case of the Aussiedler. However, against the assumption from the Michigan model about the relevance of socioeconomic factors, this study has not found considerable effects of socioeconomic characteristics on the Russian-Germans' party identification when controlling for the remaining enquired predictors. The Aussiedler's socioeconomic characteristics are thus not found to play a considerable role for whether they identify with the CDU or the AfD. A validated index of a person's socioeconomic status or merging an ordinal scaled educational attainment and vocational training variable into one aggregate predictor could serve to further test the impact of socioeconomic characteristics on the people's party identification in the frame of future more representative research. Otherwise, this result at hand implies that an individual's socioeconomic status, which can be cons

Finally, the research findings confirm the fourth hypothesis as Aussiedler who indicate nationalist and Eurosceptic views are found to a great extent more likely to identify with the AfD instead of the CDU or the SPD. Thus, the empirical evidence from investigating the Russian-German repatriates suggests that, as assumed, and besides the predictors that are part of the Michigan model, ideological convictions can indeed play an important role in predicting the party identification of individuals today. The explorative mediation analysis additionally enables to formulate the innovative hypothesis for the exclusive comparison of CDU and AfD identification that Aussiedler who feel mostly as Germans are more likely to be less Eurosceptic and thereby



more likely to identify with the CDU instead of the AfD. This assumption needs to be further tested in the frame of future research.

All in all, as probability sampling was not feasible, the obtained research results are not yet generalizable to the whole Russian-German population in Germany. Thus, future research needs to test the results' applicability to the whole Russian-German population for instance through conducting a census study, which would give any Russian-German citizen living in Germany an equal chance to participate. However, due to the multitude of participating associations and as the survey invitation was spread to a great variety of Aussiedler through different channels by different Aussiedler- disseminators, the research results at hand deserve closer attention because they point to relevant factors that potentially affect the political inclination of the wider Aussiedler population. Hence, this study closes a previous gap in literature as it yields meaningful insights into the underlying reasons for particular party identifications among Russian-German repatriates, particularly by comparing CDU and AfD attachment. For instance, the necessity to additionally take into account ideology and ethnic identification could be considered not only for future research on the party identification of Aussiedler, but also in the context of other ethnic minorities in Europe. Moreover, this research focuses exclusively on the group of Russian-German repatriates. It is recommendable for future research to compare Germans with and without an Aussiedler background while opting for a higher number of identifications with other parties than CDU or AfD. This way, it yet needs to be verified whether indeed the Aussiedler's political preferences should be considered separately or whether actually no distinction can be drawn between the party attachment of both Germans with and without an Aussiedler background. Referring to the main research interest of this study to compare the predictors of CDU and AfD party identification, one interpretation of the results from the mediation analysis could be that the CDU has more success in attracting Aussiedler who rather feel as Germans while the AfD newly attracts on a larger scale Russian-Germans who identify more with their Aussiedler identity as their target group. Therefore, the parties' election campaign strategies could be investigated as a potential predictor of the Aussiedler's electoral preferences in the frame of future research. More than ethnic identification, this study has found the great impact of nationalism and Euroscepticism on the Aussiedler's current party identification. In case these results hold true for the whole group of Aussiedler in Germany, it would be scientifically interesting and societally relevant for future research to investigate whether these ideological convictions present long-term determinants for Aussiedler's identification with the AfD or whether the identification with this rather new party in

the German political landscape might be only be short-term and caused by the people's fear and dissatisfaction with the current government's internal and asylum policies. All in all, this study has already presented valuable indications but longitudinal future studies on the party attachment and electoral preferences of the Aussiedler as well as of the German population as a whole are important to be carried out in order to determine in how far and for which reasons shifts in party identification and political support in Germany occur.

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## APPENDIX

*Table I: Online-Survey Distribution February 20-March 31, 2018*

Distributing Association/person	Date	Platform	Group name	Additional information
Museum für Russlanddeutsche Kurgeschichte (Director K.Ens)	February 20	Facebook	Museum für russland-deutsche Kulturgeschichte	Group of 192 subscribers Shared by 8 users
Felix Reifer	February 20	Facebook	Russlanddeutsche Gruppe	1,243 subscribers
Integrationshaus Lyra e.V. (Board: Gauks/Kirchner)	February 21	Facebook	Integrationshaus Lyra e.V.	508 subscribers
Jugend Lmdr Deutschland (Board: Gauks/Kirchner)	February 21	Facebook	Jugend Lmdr Deutschland	1,595 subscribers
Netzwerk Russlanddeutsche für AfD NRW (Chair E.Schmidt)	February 21	Odnoklassniki Whatsapp	Russlanddeutsche für AfD -related group-	12,666 subscribers
Netzwerk Aussiedler in der CDU Rheinland-Pfalz (Chair V.Dederer)	February 23	Facebook	Netzwerk Aussiedler in der CDU Rheinland-Pfalz	48 subscribers
VIRA e.V. (Board: E. & A. Kühl) Landmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland NRW (Chair: D. Schulmeister)	February 23	Email		received by about 500
Landmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland e.V. (Chair: W. Eisenbraun)	February 27	Email Facebook Whatsapp	Lmdr e.V. - related group-	around 10,000 members 1347 subscribers shared by Bund der Vertriebenen Landesverband Sachsen
Russian speaking people's union (Founder Andrej Geldt)	February 27	Facebook	rspu- Russian speaking people's union	328 subscribers
Deutsche Jugend aus Russland e.V. (DJR Hessen Team)	February 27	Facebook Whatsapp	rspu associated group	
Netzwerk Aussiedler in der CDU Hessen (Chair: Nazarenus-Vetter)	February 27	Email		
Netzwerk Aussiedler in der CDU Nordrhein-Westfalen (Chair: Zertik)	February 28	Facebook	Netzwerk Aussiedler in der CDU Nordrhein-Westfalen	441 subscribers shared by H. Zertik
Jugend- und Studentenring der Deutschen aus Russland (Chair: Iwakin)	February 28	Facebook	JSDR e.V.	674 subscribers shared by: Deutsche aus Russland in Haale/Saale
Reminder round: On 6 March the association leaders were asked to forward the survey link once more to their members; the vast majority of the participating associations followed this request, newly shared on Facebook by: Deutsch Russisches Jugend und Bildungsforum				

Figure I: Frequency Distribution – Party Identification Strength

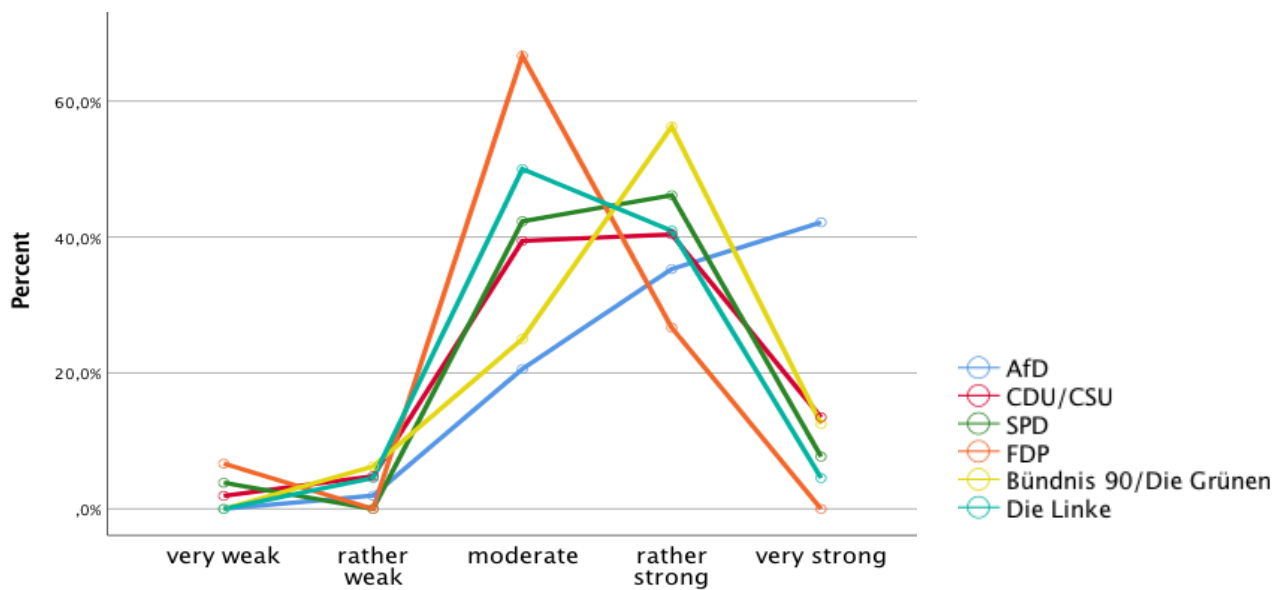


Table II. Russian-German association membership compared between CDU and AfD identification

		Party AfD (N= 102)	Identification CDU (N=104)
Russian-German association membership	CDU-related	1 (1.8%)	27 (16.3%)
	AfD-related	38 (69.6%)	0 (61.5%)
	Other	26 (18.6%)	49 (22.1%)
	None	37 (36.3%)	28 (26.9%)

Note.  $\chi^2 = 70.43$   $\Lambda = .56$   $p < .001$

The variable Russian-German association membership is excluded from the analysis due to a likely two-sided relationship. It has to be assumed that people who had a particular party identification therefore choose to become a member of the particular party-related Russian-German association. Thus, this variable cannot be treated as a predictor of party identification. Otherwise, the Russian-Germans' party identification with either the CDU or the AfD and their membership in a Russian-German association seems to be very significantly ( $p < .001$ ) and strongly (Cramer's  $V = .56$ ) related.

Table III. Student's t-test on differences in age between CDU and AfD party identifiers

	Party Identification				t	Sig. (p)
	AfD (N=101)		CDU (N=104)			
	M	SD	M	SD		
Age	42.51	13.74	42.79	15.26	2.94	0.88

The Student's t-test did not yield significant differences in age between Russian-Germans inclined to the CDU or the AfD. For both groups, the identifiers are averagely about 43 years old.

Table section IV. Cronbach's alpha values; N=298

Nationalism scale– Reliability Statistics		Aussiedler environment scale– Reliability Statistics		Euroscepticism scale– Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach 's Alpha	N of Items	Cronbach 's Alpha	N of Items	Cronbach 's Alpha	N of Items
,805	5	,550	3	,909	6

According to experts like Bland and Altman (1997), the Cronbach's alpha needs to exceed .7 for the constructed scale can be considered as reliable in the sense that all items fit together and measure the same concept. Therefore, the Aussiedler environment scale does not classify as reliable and hence is not used for the analysis.

Table V. Skewness and kurtosis among metric predictor variables

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Nationalism	298	-,271	,141	-,773	,281
Euroscepticism	298	,409	,141	-,733	,281
Vage	297	,453	,141	-,805	,282
Vstay	298	,060	,141	2,565	,281
Valid N (listwise)	297				

Following from Kim (2013), a medium-sized sample with less than 300 cases is normally distributed when any z-value (Skewness value divided by its standard error as well as Kurtosis value divided by its standard error) does not exceed 3.29. However, for stay, the kurtosis z-value exceeds this benchmark and thus may not be included in the Student's t-test, which requires normality of value distribution.

Table VI. Bivariate descriptives and Mann-Whitney U Test for nationalism and Euroscepticism sub-items

		Party AfD (N= 102)	Identification CDU (N=104)	(Mdn) AfD CDU	Sig. (p)
Euroscepticism	Economic and Monetary Union			(4) (2)	*
	Common Foreign Policy			(4) (2)	*
	Future EU enlargement			(5) (3.5)	*
	Attitude towards CFSP			(3) (2)	*
	Germany's EU membership			(4) (2)	*
	Overall attitude towards EU			(4) (2)	*
Nationalism	Impeding Refugee influx			(5) (3)	*
	Proud to be German			(5) (4)	.12
	(1) - -	5 (4.9%)	2 (1.9%)		
	(2) -	3 (2.9%)	6 (5.8%)		
	(3) 0	25 (24.5%)	28 (26.9%)		
	(4) +	15 (14.7%)	30 (28.8%)		
	(5) ++	54 (52.9%)	38 (36.5%)		
	Dangerous foreign infiltration			(5) (3)	*
	Foreigners to marry among themselves			(3) (2)	*
	Courage for stronger national feeling			(5) (4)	*

Note. \* $p < .001$

The largest share of both groups (52.9% of AfD identifiers and 36.5% of CDU identifiers) agrees very strongly to be proud of their German identity, and for both groups the smallest part (about

7%) does not agree with this statement. Thus, Mann-Whitney U test reveals that both CDU and AfD identifiers are to a similar degree proud to be German.

Table VII. *Personal environment's ethnic background compared between CDU and AfD identifiers*

		Party	Identification	Mean rank (Mdn)		Sig. (p)
		AfD	CDU	AfD	CDU	
		(N= 102)	(N=104)			
Ethnic background Family	(1) Mostly Germans	5 (4.9%)	7 (6.7%)	101.60	105.37	.59
	(2) Partly Germans, partly Aussiedler	34 (33.3%)	28 (26.9%)	(3)	(3)	
	(3) Mostly Aussiedler	63 (61.8%)	69 (66.3%)			
Ethnic background Friends	(1) Mostly Germans	12 (11.8%)	17 (16.3%)	103.84	103.17	.92
	(2) Partly Germans, partly Aussiedler	71 (69.6%)	64 (61.5%)	(2)	(2)	
	(3) Mostly Aussiedler	19 (18.6%)	23 (22.1%)			
Ethnic background Acquaintances	(1) Mostly Germans	16 (15.7%)	22 (21.2%)	108.64	98.46	.12
	(2) Partly Germans, partly Aussiedler	74 (72.5%)	76 (73.1%)	(2)	(2)	
	(3) Mostly Aussiedler	12 (11.8%)	6 (5.8%)			

As the Mann-Whitney U test results depicted in the table above show, the personal environment's ethnic background of the Aussiedler who identify with the CDU or the AfD does not differ significantly. For both groups, the family members are mostly Aussiedler while the friend and acquaintance circles mainly consist of both Germans and Aussiedler.

*Table VIII. Income and duration of stay compared between CDU and AfD identifiers*

		Party	Identification	Mean rank (Mdn)		Sig. (p)
		AfD	CDU	AfD	CDU	
		(N= 102)	(N=104)			
Household Net Income	(1) <500-<1500	25 (24.5%)	19 (18.3%)	102.29	104.69	.75
	(2) 1500-<4000	54 (52.9%)	65 (62.5%)	(2)	(2)	
	(3) 4000->8000 euros	23 (22.5%)	20 (19.2%)			
		(N=102)	(N=104)			
		M (SD)	M(SD)			
Duration of Stay		24.18 (5.84)	25.21 (6.20)	96.74	110.13	.11

Also regarding their duration of stay and indicated levels of household income, both groups do not vary significantly. Most household incomes amount to 1500 to 4000 euros and on average both groups have been staying for 24 to 25 years in Germany.

Concerning the household net income variable, the originally enquired categories were recoded into the three categories of high, middle and low income in order to correct for the incomparability of the originally indicated household income levels as the survey did not enquire the respondents' family status or number of family members.

For the continuous variable of stay, the Mann-Whitney U test was conducted instead of the Student's t-test as the assumption of normality was not fulfilled for this variable (see Table V).

## **Section IX: Assumptions testing for Multinomial Logistic Regression (Laerd Statistics,n.d.<sup>57</sup>)**

### **1. Nominal dependent variable**

The first assumption is fulfilled as the dependent variable of party identification is measured on a nominal scale and has more than two categories. If the dependent variable would have been dichotomous, the use of binary logistic regression would have been more appropriate.

<sup>57</sup> Laerd Statistics. (n.d.). Multinomial Logistic Regression using SPSS Statistics. Retrieved from <https://statistics.laerd.com/spss-tutorials/multinomial-logistic-regression-using-spss-statistics.php>

## **2. One or more independent variables that are continuous, ordinal or nominal**

In total, eight nominal, ordinal and continuous independent variables are included in the multinomial logistic regression. The only ordinal variable, ethnic identification, is treated as categorical independent variable as ordinal variables need to be treated either as ordinal or continuous.

## **3. Independence of observations and mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories**

Firstly, the given dataset fulfils the assumption of the observations' independence as no longitudinal but a cross-sectional study was conducted without repeated measurements. Also, the repeated participation of any participant was counteracted with a setting option that prevented filling out the survey more often than once. Additionally, uncomplete survey answers that were not submitted are not considered for the data analysis.

Moreover, the answering options of party identification, the dependent variable, are coded as mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories and it was only possible to choose one party identification category. Following from theoretical considerations, it is expected that any individual either identifies only with one political party or does not identify with any party.

## **4. No Multicollinearity**

A bivariate correlation analysis for all of the eight independent variables yields only Pearson Correlation coefficients below the benchmark of .7 (Dorman et al, 2013) as depicted in the table below<sup>58</sup>. Thus, no multicollinearity is found between any of the independent variables.

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<sup>58</sup> Dormann, C. F., Elith, J., Bacher, S., Buchmann, C., Carl, G., Carré, G., ... & Münkemüller, T. (2013). Collinearity: a review of methods to deal with it and a simulation study evaluating their performance. *Ecography*, 36(1), 27-46.

Table IX.: Bivariate correlations between the predictor variables

		Gender	Edu_du mmy	Church_ dummy	EthnicID_ Cat	Euroscept icism	National ism	Vocational training	Occupation status
Gender	Pearson	1	-,010	-,027	,020	,134*	,104	,027	,034
	Correlation								
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,858	,647	,736	,020	,072	,642	,559
Edu_dummy	N	298	298	298	298	298	298	296	298
	Pearson	-,010	1	-,012	-,099	-,163**	-,276**	,272**	,170**
	Correlation								
Church_dummy	Sig. (2-tailed)	,858		,838	,087	,005	,000	,000	,003
	N	298	298	298	298	298	298	296	298
	Pearson	-,027	-,012	1	-,126*	-,061	,095	,079	,016
EthnicID_Cat	Correlation								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,647	,838		,030	,293	,100	,173	,789
	N	298	298	298	298	298	298	296	298
Euroscepticism	Pearson	,020	-,099	-,126*	1	,221**	,040	-,077	,062
	Correlation								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,736	,087	,030		,000	,489	,189	,286
Nationalism	N	298	298	298	298	298	298	296	298
	Pearson	,134*	-,163**	-,061	,221**	1	,481**	-,261**	-,091
	Correlation								
Vocational training	Sig. (2-tailed)	,020	,005	,293	,000		,000	,000	,118
	N	298	298	298	298	298	298	296	298
	Pearson	,104	-,276**	,095	,040	,481**	1	-,206**	-,115*
Occupation status	Correlation								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,072	,000	,100	,489	,000		,000	,046
	N	298	298	298	298	298	298	296	298
Occupation status	Pearson	,027	,272**	,079	-,077	-,261**	-,206**	1	,333**
	Correlation								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,642	,000	,173	,189	,000	,000		,000
Occupation status	N	296	296	296	296	296	296	296	296
	Pearson	,034	,170**	,016	,062	-,091	-,115*	,333**	1
	Correlation								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,559	,003	,789	,286	,118	,046	,000	
	N	298	298	298	298	298	298	296	298

Note. \*Correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed). \*\*Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed).

## 5. Linear relationship between continuous independent variables and the logit transformation of the dependent variable

In order to test this assumption, the Box Tidwell test is conducted, for which respectively the product of each continuous predictor variable (Euroscepticism; nationalism) and its natural logarithm ( $\log(\text{Euroscepticism; nationalism})$ ) is computed. The two new variables are then added to the multinomial logit model and this assumption is considered fulfilled when none of the two variables is significantly correlated with the predictor variable: While the product from Euroscepticism is not found significantly associated ( $p = .19$ ), the nationalism variable product is significantly related ( $p < .01$ ) to the predictor variable. Thus, the assumption of a linear relationship is not met for the original nationalism variable. Therefore, for the results of the multinomial logit models involving the predictor of nationalism stay valid, this predictor variable needs to be converted. From the range of commonly attributed transformations, only the square



transformation of the nationalism variable (nationalism<sup>2</sup>), which transformation method was *inter alia* tested and approved by Hosmer, Stanley and Strudiviat (2013), shows a linear relationship with the logit transformation of party identification ( $p = .14$ ). Thus, for the final multinomial logistic regression model, the square transformation of the original nationalism variable is used.

#### **6. No outliers, high leverage values or highly influential points**

Boxplots for each of the eight predictor variables show no outliers. Therefore, also the presence of any highly influential points can be ruled out. Also generally, no such outlier, leverage or highly influential points are to be expected among the eight independent variables, as these involve only preset answers on nominal or 5-point scales. In order to reduce weakly represented categories, the previously ordinal predictor variables were additionally recoded.

#### **Section X: Testing for Mediation in the multinomial logit model**

As already shown in Model IV, the previous consistent significant effect of ethnic identification on party identification vanishes once Euroscepticism is entered to the regression model. Baron and Kenny (1986) established a widely used model to test for mediation effects in three steps: In the first step, a significant effect of the initial predictor variable (X) on the potential mediator (M) needs to be found. In the second step, the effect on the predictor variable (X) on the outcome variable (Y) needs to be tested. Finally, if in the third step, a significant impact of M on Y is found while the effect of X on Y in this third model is lower than in the second model, then a mediator effect is established. Moreover, a “perfect mediation holds if the independent variable has no effect when the mediator is controlled” (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1177).

Thus, as a significant impact of ethnic identification on the outcome variable is determined before Euroscepticism is entered to the model, (Model I, II and III), the assumption of step 2 is fulfilled. Moreover, as in Model 5.12, the effect of Euroscepticism is very significant ( $p < .001$ ), and ethnic identification becomes insignificant ( $p = .97$ ), also the condition of step 3 is fulfilled. Therefore, Euroscepticism is suspected to moderate the effect of ethnic identification of the dichotomous party identification outcome variable.

Finally, in order to test the first assumption (step 1), a linear regression is conducted with Euroscepticism as outcome variable, which tests the impact of ethnic identification on Euroscepticism. Besides, as the multinomial logit sub-model, for which this mediation effect is suspected, only refers to the comparison between CDU and AfD party identification ( $N=205$ ), for the linear regression, also only this reduced dataset is used.

*Table X. Linear Regression testing the effect of ethnic identification on Euroscepticism ( $N=205$ )*

Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
.05	(Constant)	3.55	0.18		19.67	*
	Ethnic_dummy1	-0.78	0.22	-0.36	-3.62	***
	Ethnic_dummy2	-0.63	0.21	-0.30	-3.04	***

*Note.* Dependent: Euroscepticism \*  $p < .001$  \*\*\*  $p < .05$

As the results of the linear regression show, ethnic identification has a significant effect ( $p < .05$ ) on Euroscepticism. Aussiedler who see themselves rather as Germans or both as Aussiedler and Germans are expected to be considerably less Eurosceptic than the Russian-Germans, who think of themselves exclusively as Aussiedler ( $B = -0.78/-0.63$ <sup>59</sup>).

Hence, ultimately, as the conditions of all three steps from the Baron and Kenny (1986) method are fulfilled, this study established the post-hoc hypothesis that Euroscepticism mediates perfectly the effect of ethnic identification on party identification as dichotomous outcome variable (CDU identification/AfD identification). Drawing on the test results, Aussiedler who identify (rather) as Germans, are expected to be less Eurosceptic and thus to identify more likely with the CDU than with the AfD. This hypothesis needs to be further tested in future research and also for different party identifications beyond the attachment to the AfD or the CDU.

<sup>59</sup> The B -coefficient of around .5 means that those who think of themselves mostly as Aussiedler indicate on average 0.5-point higher values on each tested Euroscepticism indicator compared to those Aussiedler who also or rather see themselves as Germans.

## Section XI: Original final multinomial logit models (uncorrected nationalism variable)

Table XI a). Original uncorrected Multinomial logit model: Sources of AfD vs. CDU identification  
(Odds ratio values for AfD as reference category and CDU as comparison category)

Uncorrected Model A		
Gender	Female (ref. = Male)	2.48
Ethnic Identification	(Rather) as German	3.20
	Both German and Aussiedler (ref. = (Rather) as Aussiedler)	1.65
Church Attendance	Never going to church (ref. = Churchgoers)	0.14*
Education	No Abitur (ref. = Abitur)	1.81
Vocational training	In vocational training	0.22
	No vocational training	0.73
	Vocational-operational training	0.37
	Commercial/vocational school	1.18
	Technical college	0.47
	Polytechnic degree	0.26
	(ref. = University degree)	
Occupation status	Not employed	0.50
	Doing vocational training	815.16
	Family worker	3.22
	Worker	0.16
	Self-maintained	0.16
	Employee	0.27
	Academic in liberal profession (ref. = Civil servant)	0.34
Euroscepticism	(continuous)	0.18*
Nationalism	(continuous)	0.10*
	<i>N</i>	296
	McFadden Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.41
	Goodness of fit	389.47 (df 140)

Note. \*  $p < .001$

Table XIa) depicted above presents the preliminary final multinomial logit model to compare the impact of the eight potential predictors on the dichotomous party identification outcome variable, with AfD party identification as reference category and CDU identification as comparison category. Similarly, as the corrected version, **Model A** shows a significant impact of church attendance, Euroscepticism and nationalism on the dichotomous party identification variable. However, the original model (Table XIa)) needed to be rejected as for nationalism, no linear relationship with the log transformation of the predictor variable was found (Multinomial logistic regression assumption). Hence, a new model was constructed, which includes a square transformation of the original nationalism variable, from which the final results of this study are drawn. As the significance values and coefficients (apart from those of the corrected nationalism variable) of the corrected Model V assemble the values from the original model (Table XI a)), the overall model proves to be robust. However, due to the transformation, the concrete strength of nationalism on the outcome variable cannot be interpreted.

*Table XI b). Uncorrected Multinomial logit model: Comparing sources' impacts on party identification (SPD as comparison category; AfD and CDU as respective reference category)*

		Model B	Model C
	Reference category	AfD	CDU
Gender	Female (ref. = Male)	4.13 <sup>***</sup>	1.63
Ethnic Identification	(Rather) as German	0.37	0.12 <sup>***</sup>
	Both German and Aussiedler (ref. = (Rather) as Aussiedler)	1.21	0.73
Church Attendance	Never going to church (ref. = Churchgoers)	0.60	4.26 <sup>**</sup>
Education	No Abitur (ref. = Abitur)	0.85	0.47
Vocational training	In vocational training	0.52	2.39
	No vocational training	1.217E-6	3.030E-6
	Vocational-operational training	0.27	0.74
	Commercial/vocational school	1.318E-6	1.121E-6
	Technical college	0.81	1.72
	Polytechnic degree (ref. = University degree)	0.04 <sup>***</sup>	0.13

Occupation status	Not employed	1.06	2.14
	Doing vocational training	0.01	8.773E-6
	Family worker	3.80	1.18
	Worker	3.485E-6	1.254E-5
	Self-maintained	2.77	17.15
	Employee	1.41	5.12
	Academic in liberal profession (ref. = Civil servant)	0.45	1.34
Euroscepticism	(continuous)	0.12 <sup>*</sup>	0.65
Nationalism <sup>2</sup>	(continuous)	0.10 <sup>*</sup>	1.00
	<i>N</i>	296	296
	McFadden Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.41	.41
	Goodness of fit	389.47 (df 140)	389.47 (df 140)

---

*Note.* <sup>\*</sup>  $p < .001$     <sup>\*\*</sup>  $p < .01$     <sup>\*\*\*</sup>  $p < .05$

The above in Table XI b) jointly depicted multinomial logit models and which treat the AfD (Model B) and the CDU (Model C) respectively as reference category and the SPD as comparison category, include the uncorrected nationalism variable. The fact that the significance values and coefficients of these original models (Pseudo R<sup>2</sup> McFadden = .41) and of the corrected models do not considerably differ, certifies the robustness of the general model.

*Tabel XII. Multinomial logit model comparing AfD and SPD identification without ideology predictors (Odds ratio values with AfD reference category and SPD comparison category)*

		Model D
Gender	Female (ref. = Male)	3.40***
Ethnic Identification	(Rather) as German	0.64
	Both German and Aussiedler (ref. = (Rather) as Aussiedler)	2.35
Church Attendance	Never going to church (ref. = Churchgoers)	1.49
Education	No Abitur (ref. = Abitur)	0.49
Vocational training	In vocational training	0.51
	No vocational training	2.464E-6
	Vocational-operational training	0.13
	Commercial/vocational school	1.055E-6
	Technical college	0.65
	Polytechnic degree (ref. = University degree)	0.11**
Occupation status	Not employed	2.37
	Doing vocational training	22.44
	Family worker	4.29
	Worker	1.035E-5
	Self-maintained	2.94
	Employee	4.10
	Academic in liberal profession (ref. = Civil servant)	1.9
	<i>N</i>	296
	McFadden Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.20
	Goodness of fit	186.38 (df 126)

*Note.* \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .05$

As depicted in Table XII, similarly as in the complete model, which includes all predictor variables for the comparison of SPD and AfD identification, no ethnic identification category becomes significant when Euroscepticism is omitted from the model (Model D). Thus, differently from the comparison between CDU and AfD identifiers, Euroscepticism is not found to mediate the effect of ethnic identification on the party identification with the SPD or AfD.

## APPENDIX Section XIII.

### Fragebogen Parteienidentifikation

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

#### Questionnaire-version of the Online-survey including explanations

- 1a In welchem Jahr sind Sie geboren? **Geburtsjahr:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Age - Wittlif & Beigang, 2016, p.33; all of the demographic variable items are retrieved from the Integration Barometer from 2016 as mentioned in the Operationalization section)
- 1b Wie lautet ihr Geschlecht  
**Geschlecht?** ☐ Männlich ☐ Weiblich (Gender, ibid, p.33)
- 1c Sind Sie (oder Ihre Eltern/Großeltern) als **Aussiedler** oder **Spätaussiedler** anerkannt? ☐ Ja ☐ Nein (officially acknowledged Aussiedler status of oneself or parents, ibid, p.37)
- 1d In welchem Land sind Sie geboren?  
(one's birth country, ibid., p.34) ☐ Deutschland ☐ Russische Föderation/Russland  
☐ Ukraine ☐ Weißrussland ☐ Usbekistan ☐ Kasachstan ☐ Georgien  
☐ Aserbaidschan ☐ Litauen ☐ Moldawien ☐ Lettland ☐ Kirgistan  
☐ Tadschikistan ☐ Armenien ☐ Turkmenistan ☐ Estland  
Anderes Land, und zwar \_\_\_\_\_
- 1e In welchem Land sind Ihre Eltern bzw. Ihr Aussiedler-Elternteil geboren? (parents' / Aussiedler parent's birth country, asking for both parents individually would increase response fatigue, ibid, see p.36)
- 1g In welchem Jahr sind Sie nach Deutschland eingewandert?  
(Year of arrival in Germany, ibid, p.36) Einwanderungsjahr: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Baden-Württemberg ☐ Bayern ☐ Berlin ☐ Brandenburg ☐ Bremen  
☐ Hamburg ☐ Hessen ☐ Mecklenburg-Vorpommern ☐ Niedersachsen  
☐ Nordrhein-Westfalen ☐ Rheinland-Pfalz ☐ Saarland ☐ Sachsen  
☐ Sachsen-Anhalt ☐ Schleswig Holstein ☐ Thüringen
- 1h In welchem Bundesland leben Sie?  
(Bundesland, where respondent lives, ibid, p.33)
- 1i In welchen der folgenden ausgeführten Vereinigungen oder Netzwerke sind Sie Mitglied? Mehrfachantworten möglich.  
(Membership in Russian-German Network or association, multiple answers possible + open answer option; Kloke, 2013, p.305)  
☐ Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland e.V.  
☐ Netzwerk Russlanddeutsche, Aussiedler und Spätaussiedler für die AfD ☐ Jugendorganisation der Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland ☐ Netzwerk Aussiedler in der CDU ☐ VIRA e.V.  
andere russlanddeutsche Vereinigung: \_\_\_\_\_

2 a) **Parteienneigung (Party Identification).** In Deutschland neigen viele Leute längere Zeit einer bestimmten politischen Partei zu, obwohl sie auch ab und zu eine andere Partei wählen. Wie ist das bei Ihnen: Neigen Sie - ganz allgemein gesprochen - einer bestimmten Partei zu? Und wenn ja, welcher? (Johann, 2009, p.446)

- ☐ AfD (newly included)   ☐ CDU/CSU   ☐ SPD   ☐ FDP   ☐ Bündnis 90/Die Grünen   ☐ Die Linke
- ☐ Andere Partei   ☐ keiner bestimmten Partei

b) Wie stark oder wie schwach neigen Sie - alles zusammengenommen - dieser Partei zu? (Johann, 2009, p.446; Ohr & Quandt, 2011b, p.1)

- ☐ sehr stark   ☐ ziemlich stark   ☐ mäßig   ☐ ziemlich schwach   ☐ sehr schwach

(Strength of party identification, 5-point scale from very strongly to very weakly)

c) Parteienneigung des **Persönlichen Umfeldes**. Zu welcher Partei neigen die **meisten** Ihrer Bekannten, Freunde und Angehörigen?

(Personal environment's party identification question and answer options from Ohr & Quandt, 2011b, p.2; asking which party most family members, friends, and acquaintances identify with; for technical reasons and to avoid response fatigue, the respondents are not asked separately beforehand, if most of their environment identifies with one or with many different parties, but the latter answer is included in this question, which was asked by Quandt & Ohr in the second step. Thus, either respondents agree that their personal environment identifies with one particular party and indicate the party right away or they tick that mostly, their family environment identifies with different parties).

- ☐ AfD   ☐ CDU/CSU   ☐ SPD   ☐ FDP   ☐ Bündnis 90/Die Grünen   ☐ Die Linke

Andere Partei, und zwar \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Neigen vorwiegend zu unterschiedlichen Parteien

3 **Persönliches Umfeld.** Die folgenden Aussagen beziehen sich auf Ihr soziales Umfeld. Bitte geben Sie an, was für Sie zutrifft. (Ethnic Identity of Personal environment: The following statements refer to your social environment. Please indicate what applies to you)

My family members/friends/acquaintances are a) mainly Germans b) partly Germans, and partly Aussiedler c) mainly Aussiedler.

- Meine Freunde sind   ☐ vorwiegend Aussiedler   ☐ teils Deutsche, teils Aussiedler   ☐ vorwiegend Deutsche
- Meine Bekannten sind   ☐ vorwiegend Aussiedler   ☐ teils Deutsche, teils Aussiedler   ☐ vorwiegend Deutsche
- Meine Angehörigen sind   ☐ vorwiegend Aussiedler   ☐ teils Deutsche, teils Aussiedler   ☐ vorwiegend Deutsche



**4 Eigene Wahrnehmung.** Manche Leute fühlen sich selbst vor allem als Deutsche, manche Leute fühlen sich vor allem als Aussiedler. Welche der folgenden Antworten beschreibt am besten, als was Sie sich selbst fühlen?

**(Own impression (Ethnic Identification):** translated into German from “Some people think of themselves first as German. Others may think of themselves first as Aussiedler. Which best describes how you think of yourself?” (Dancygier & Saunders, 2006, p. 980).)

☐ Deutsche/r, nicht Aussiedler/in (German, not Aussiedler) ☐ eher Deutsche/r als Aussiedler/in (more German than Aussiedler) ☐ zugleich Deutsche/r und Aussiedler (equally German and Aussiedler) ☐ eher Aussiedler als Deutsche/r (more Aussiedler than German) ☐ Aussiedler/in, nicht Deutsche/r (Aussiedler, not German) (Dancygier & Saunders, 2006, p. 980; Jowell, 2000, p.288)

**5 Kirchengangshäufigkeit.** Wie oft gehen Sie gewöhnlich zum Gottesdienst – nie, einmal im Jahr, mehrmals im Jahr, einmal im Monat, zwei- bis dreimal im Monat, einmal die Woche oder öfter? (Rattinger et al., 2017b, p. 44)

☐ nie ☐ einmal im Jahr ☐ mehrmals im Jahr ☐ einmal im Monat ☐ zwei- bis dreimal im Monat  
☐ einmal in der Woche ☐ öfter

**(Church attendance frequency: Generally, how frequently do you attend religious services** - never, only once a year, more than once a year, at least once a month, two to three times a month, at least once a week, more than once a week?”-Rattinger et al., 2017a, p. 44)

## 6 Wertvorstellungen (Ideological convictions, nationalism and Euroscepticism separately).

**a) Auf Deutschland bezogen: (German nationalism scale by Schumann, 2003, p.248; 4-point scale from strongly agree (+2) to strongly disagree (-2) and introductory question from Falter et al, 2013, p. 428)**

Hier in diesem Block finden Sie eine Reihe von Aussagen, denen manche Leute zustimmen, die manche aber auch ablehnen. Wie ist das bei Ihnen? Verwenden Sie bitte die Skala von -2 bis +2. -2 bedeutet, dass Sie dieser Meinung überhaupt nicht zustimmen, +2, dass Sie ihr voll und ganz zustimmen. Mit den Werten dazwischen können Sie Ihre Meinung abstufen. In this block, you find a set of statements, which some people agree with and others refuse. How about you. Please use the scale from -2 to +2. -2 means that you strongly disagree with this view, +2 means that you completely agree. You may grade your opinion with the values in between.

	stimme überhaupt nicht zu	stimme eher nicht zu	neutral	stimme eher zu	stimme voll und ganz zu
Der Zuzug von Ausländern sollte in Zukunft erschwert werden. The influx of refugees should be impeded in the future.	- 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> +2
Ich bin stolz, ein Deutscher (eine Deutsche) zu sein. I am proud to be German.	- 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> +2
Die Bundesrepublik ist durch die vielen Ausländer zu einem gefährlichen Maß überfremdet. The Federal republic has become non-German to a dangerous degree because of its many resident foreigners.	- 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> +2

Ausländer sollten grundsätzlich ihre Ehepartner unter ihren eigenen Landsleuten auswählen. - 2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +2  
Foreigners should generally choose their spouses from their own people.

Wir sollten wieder Mut zu einem starken Nationalgefühl haben. - 2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ +2  
We should regain courage for a strong national feeling.

**b) Auf Europa bezogen (Euro-support/Euroscepticism scale by Theißen, 2015, p.98):** Three sub-questions, 5-point scale from very positive to very negative attitude; A1) European Union as a Economic and Monetary Union which has a single currency, the euro; A2) The Common Foreign Policy of the 27 Member States; A3) A future enlargement of the EU; A4) The Common Defence and Security Policy of the EU Member State.  
B one's country's membership in the EU; C generally, the image the EU invokes in the respondent; for the indexation in the frame of the analysis Theißen's original answer scales are slightly adjusted for each of the three questions is followed by 5 answer options).

A. Wie ist Ihre **Meinung** zu den folgenden Vorschlägen? Bitte geben Sie an ob Sie jeweils ☐sehr positiv, ☐ziemlich positiv, ☐weder positiv noch negativ, ☐ziemlich negativ oder ☐sehr negativ zu den Vorschlägen eingestellt sind.

- 1) Eine Europäische Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion mit einer gemeinsamen Währung, dem Euro
- 2) Eine gemeinsame Außenpolitik der 27 Mitgliedstaaten der EU.
- 3) Eine zusätzliche Erweiterung der EU, um in den nächsten Jahren andere Länder aufzunehmen.
- 4) Eine gemeinsame Verteidigungs- und Sicherheitspolitik der EU-Mitgliedstaaten.

B. Ist die Mitgliedschaft ihres Landes in der Europäischen Union ihrer Meinung nach eine ☐sehr gute, ☐eher gute, ☐weder gute noch schlechte, ☐eher schlechte, ☐sehr schlechte Sache?

C. Ganz allgemein gesprochen ruft die EU bei ihnen ein ☐sehr positives, ☐ziemlich positives, ☐weder positives noch negatives, ☐ziemlich negatives, ☐sehr negatives Bild hervor?

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**7 Nettohaushaltseinkommen (Net household income).** "Können Sie mir in etwa die Höhe des gesamten monatlichen Nettoeinkommens Ihres Haushalts nennen?" Original from Büsch et al, 2011, Annex, p.44 rewritten to prevent response fatigue to the more concise question:

Wie ist die Höhe des gesamten monatlichen Nettoeinkommens Ihres Haushalts?

Explanation text taken from Büsch et al, 2011, Annex, p.44:

Gemeint ist das Einkommen nach Abzug der Steuern und Beiträge zur Sozialversicherung (post tax and minus social security contributions). Bitte berücksichtigen Sie die Einkommen aller Haushaltsmitglieder und auch regelmäßige Zahlungen wie Wohngeld, Kindergeld, Renten usw. (Introductory question from Büsch et al, 2011, Annex, p.44;

answer options based on German income categories; from Integration Barometer 2016, Wittlif & Beigang, 2016, pp. 58-59)

- |   |                            |    |                            |
|---|----------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| 1 | unter 500 EURO             | 2  | 500 bis unter 1.000 EURO   |
| 3 | 1.000 bis unter 1.500 EURO | 4  | 1.500 bis unter 2.000 EURO |
| 5 | 2.000 bis unter 2.500 EURO | 6  | 2.500 bis unter 3.000 EURO |
| 7 | 3.000 bis unter 4.000 EURO | 8  | 4.000 bis unter 5.000 EURO |
| 9 | 5.000 bis unter 8.000 EURO | 10 | 8.000 EURO und mehr        |

8 **Schulabschluss.** Welchen höchsten allgemeinbildenden **Schulabschluss** haben Sie?

(**School-leaving qualification**; item retrieved from Federal Statistical Office, 1999, p.11; "Ich habe/bin"(I have/did) left out as in Federal Statistical Office, 2016 )

- ☐ von der Schule abgegangen ohne Hauptschulabschluss (Volksschulabschluss) (**left school without basic qualification**)
- ☐ Hauptschulabschluss (Volksschulabschluss) (**basic school qualification**)
- ☐ Realschulabschluss (Mittlere Reife) (**secondary school certificate**)
- ☐ Abschluss der Polytechnischen Oberschule, 10. Klasse (**polytechnic secondary school certificate**)
- ☐ Fachhochschulreife (**Advanced technical college certificate**)
- ☐ fachgebundene Hochschulreife/Abitur (Gymnasium bzw. EOS) (**general qualification for university entrance**)
- ☐ anderer Schulabschluss, und zwar (**other school-leaving qualification, namely**) \_\_\_\_\_

9 **Beruflicher Abschluss.** Welchen höchsten beruflichen Ausbildungsabschluss haben Sie?

*Wenn sie den Abschluss im Ausland erworben haben, geben Sie bitte an, welche der Antworten am meisten zutrifft.*  
(**Vocational training**, question and answers retrieved from Federal Statistical Office, 1999, p.12; shortened as in Federal Statistical Office, 2016; sentence added given the Russian-Germans as units of observation: In case you finished your vocational training, please indicate which of the listed answers applies most)

- ☐ noch in beruflicher Ausbildung (**Auszubildende[r], Student[in]**) (**in vocational training; apprentice; student**)
- ☐ **Keinen beruflichen Abschluss** und bin nicht in beruflicher Ausbildung (**no vocational training**)
- ☐ Beruflich-betriebliche Berufsausbildung (**Lehre**) abgeschlossen (**vocational-operational training**)
- ☐ Berufsqualifizierender Abschluss einer beruflich-schulische Ausbildung (**Berufsfachschule, Handelsschule**) abgeschlossen (**commercial/ vocational school**)
- ☐ Abschluss an einer **Fachschule, Meister-, Technikerschule, Berufs- oder Fachakademie** (**technical college**)

☐ **Fachhochschulabschluss** (polytechnic degree)

☐ **Hochschulabschluss** (university degree)

☐ Einen anderen beruflichen Abschluss, und zwar: (other vocational training, namely) \_\_\_\_\_

**10 Berufliche Stellung.** Welche berufliche Stellung trifft derzeit auf Sie zu?

(Occupational status listed in accordance with German "EPG" (Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero)- occupation classes; retrieved from Federal Statistical Office, 1999, p.35; shortened and adjusted as in Federal Statistical Office, 2016; the additional question about the former occupational status is left out as respondents' could easily confuse it with their former occupation in the country they came from. This would not pertain to the person's current socioeconomic status in Germany, which is being measured. However, the answer option of "not employed" , which is followed by an explanation is also included to cover also those without an occupational status.)

☐ Beamter/Beamtin, Richter(in), Berufssoldat(in) (civil servant, judge, professional soldier)

☐ Akademiker(in) in freiem Beruf (Arzt/Ärztin, Rechtsanwalt/-anwältin, Steuerberater[in] u. ä.)  
(academic in liberal profession, such as doctor, lawyer, tax consultant)

☐ Angestellte(r) (employee)

☐ selbständig im Handel, Gewerbe, Handwerk, Industrie, Dienstleistung bzw. PGH-Mitglied  
(self-maintained in trade, commerce, industry, services)

☐ selbständige(r) Landwirt(in) bzw. Genossenschaftsbauer/-bäuerin (master farmer)

☐ Arbeiter(in) (worker)

☐ mithelfende(r) Familienangehörige(r) (family worker)

☐ in einer beruflichen Ausbildung/Lehre (in vocational training)

☐ nicht erwerbstätig (not employed, including..) (einschließlich: Studenten, die nicht gegen Geld arbeiten, Arbeitslose, Null-Kurzarbeit, Vorruhestand, Rentner) additionally included from Federal Statistical Office, 1999, p.20, to lead over to the last survey question)

**11 Erwerbstätigkeit.** Sagen Sie bitte, zu welcher Gruppe auf dieser Liste Sie gehören.

(**Employment status**, from Federal Statistical office, 1999, p. 45, answer option “employed” added, which was not originally included as the statistical office enquired employment types in a separate item if people are full-time or part-time employed etc., which this study does not need)

- ☐ Studenten/-innen (**student**)
- ☐ Erwerbstätig (**employed**)
- ☐ Rentner/-innen, Pensionäre/-innen, im Vorruhestand (**retiree, pensioneer, early retirement**)
- ☐ Arbeitslose (**unemployed**)
- ☐ Dauerhaft Erwerbsunfähige (**permanently unable to work**)
- ☐ Hausfrauen/Hausmänner (**housewife/man**)
- ☐ Sonstiges, und zwar (**other, namely**): \_\_\_\_\_

**12 Bundestagswahl.** Welche Partei haben Sie bei der letzten Bundestagswahl am 24. September 2017 gewählt oder waren Sie nicht wählen beziehungsweise waren Sie nicht wahlberechtigt? (**Vote choice**: Which party did you vote for, or did you not vote, or were you ineligible to vote in the federal election on 24 September 2017?, based on Rattinger et al., 2017c, p. 21- German Longitudinal Election Study (GLES))

- ☐AfD — ☐CDU/CSU ☐SPD ☐FDP ☐Bündnis 90/ Die Grünen ☐Die Linke ☐Andere Partei
- ☐war nicht wählen ☐war nicht wahlberechtigt

**13** Wenn Sie weitere Anmerkungen zu Ihrer Parteiidentifikation oder zu dem ausgefüllten Fragebogen haben, können Sie diese gerne in das folgende Feld schreiben.

(If you have any additional remarks regarding your party identification or regarding the survey that you just filled in, please feel free to write them into the box below)

-open question and text field at the end of the survey to give the respondents the opportunity to leave comments-